WHITEHEAD'S MISAPPREHENSION OF HUME

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List of Abbreviations

Complete Title	
A Treatise of Human Nature by David Hume	Tr.
An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding by David Hume	Inq.
Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion by David Hume	D.C.N.R.
Adventures of Ideas by Alfred North Whitehead	A.I.
Modes of Thought by Alfred North Whitehead	M.T.
Process and Reality by Alfred North Whitehead	P.R.
Science and the Modern World by Alfred North Whitehead	S.M.W.

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Thesis Abstract

It is the fundamental intention of this thesis to examine some of the implications which arise from the denial of two previously widely accepted judgements of David Hume. The first judgement is that Hume's philosophy is lucid and, with the exception of a few ambiguities, devoid of complexities and subtleties. The second is that the quintessence of Hume is his sensationalist epistemology and the scepticism toward morality, causality, and personal identity which appear to be its major consequences. The discrediting of this second judgement has had the direct result of a denial of the first as well, for it illustrates that if Hume's intentions are not strictly sceptical, they must be more complex than has been popularly acknowledged to be the case.

However, the denial of these two mistaken judgements is in itself no novelty, and as such must not be regarded as the major thrust of the dissertation. As evidence of this the thesis follows closely Norman Kemp Smith's widely accepted revision of the traditional estimate of Hume: that Hume is not to be regarded solely as the sceptical successor of Locke and Berkeley, but as a philosopher who sought to develop a new understanding of the nature of human knowledge by means of an investigation of the epistemological significance of our beliefs and feelings and their influence upon

all facets of human behavior. The wide acclaim accorded Kemp Smith's revision of Hume illustrates the fact that this new understanding of Hume should no longer be considered novel.

However, there do appear to be some novel implications arising from this revision which have yet to be recognized by contemporary philosophy. Specifically, some contemporary philosophers have yet to recognize that this revised estimate of Hume requires a comparable reassessment of their own understanding of their relation to the history of philosophy. In particular, A. J. Ayer, in Language, Truth and Logic, gives evidence that he has failed to recognize the implications of this revised estimate when he claims Hume as the direct progenitor of Logical Positivism.[1] Although Hume is clearly a seminal source for such a philosophy, if Kemp Smith is correct it must also be acknowledged that he is the ancestor of less positivist, more constructive forms of philosophy as well.

Thus the thesis argues that the more important error is found in Whitehead's similar attitude toward Hume. Although Whitehead's estimates of Hume have a greater ambiguity about them than Ayer's, there does seem to be a consistent denial of Hume's "sensationalist dogmatism" which culminates, says Whitehead, in the mistaken assumption, "that the search for data is to be narrowed to the question 'what data are directly provided by the activity of the sense organs --preferably the eyes?'".[1]

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[1] A. J. Ayer, op. cit., p. 54.

This misapprehension on Whitehead's part has had the unfortunate consequence of preventing Whiteheadians from recognizing the full import of Kemp Smith's revised estimate of Hume. Whiteheadians have continued to regard Hume and most of his contemporary positivist descendents as adversaries. But, more importantly, Whiteheadians have been prevented from recognizing a profound continuity between Whitehead and Hume concerning the dominance of emotion over reason.

Thus the thesis takes the tack that Whitehead's mistaken estimate of Hume must be remedied. Specifically, Whitehead's misapprehension that sensa are more important than emotions for Hume must be corrected. Two steps are taken to correct this error in Whitehead. First, an examination of several crucial doctrines in Hume is undertaken which demonstrates the priority of non-sensationalist notions. For example, in Hume's discussion of morality it is demonstrated how the emotion of sympathy serves as the formative factor underlying moral judgements. Second, a response, on behalf of Hume, is made to the Whiteheadian criticism that Hume's philosophy is atomistic and sensationalist in its failure to develop a doctrine of power comparable to Locke's understanding of power. An attempt is made to show how Hume's discussion of psychological necessity is expressive of an understanding of power which is comparable to that found in Locke, though admittedly expressed in an elliptical and incomplete fashion.

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[1] A. N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, p. 226.

In sum, it is the contention of the thesis that this new estimate of Hume's position regarding the priority of feelings over reason must be regarded as both a corrective to Whitehead's mistaken estimate of Hume and the clearest indication that Hume is a significant precursor of whitehead's own philosophy of organism. It is this contention which must be regarded as the most significant conclusion of the thesis. For if it can be demonstrated that there is a continuity between Whitehead and Hume, then the way can be cleared for a new understanding of the relationship between Whiteheadian modes of thought and the more dominant, Analytic, modes of Anglo-Saxon philosophy.

Chapter One -- Hume and the Whiteheadian Misapprehension

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1. The Recent Reassessment of David Hume

One possible reason for the gap which currently separates Whiteheadian metaphysics from Analytic[1] philosophy may be traced to the way in which these differing modes of thought view the traditional discussion of metaphysics. In particular, many Analytic thinkers are prone to regard metaphysical speculation as the attempt to resuscitate a dead enterprise which was finally despatched by the scepticism of David Hume and only posthumously eulogized by Kant in his discussion of the synthetic a priori. Whiteheadians have contended on the other hand, that Hume's scepticism leads philosophy to bankrupt conclusions, to a reductio ad absurdum[2] and in so far as Kant accepts Hume's assessment of the problem he must be regarded as dealing in bankrupt philosophical currency as well.

It is the contention of this study that both of these estimates of Hume contain a fundamental misapprehension. Both of them have overlooked the less sceptical, more constructive side of Hume's philosophy which has recently been brought to the attention of the philosophical world. Perhaps, if this difficulty can be cleared up then the way will be prepared for another estimate of the relationship between these two differing modes of thought. But that is to get ahead of ourselves. A more appropriate beginning requires a consideration of precisely how these two philosophies take their departure from David Hume.

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[1] This term is used to refer to those philosophies of Analysis, frequently called, "Logical Empiricism," which may be regarded as the contemporary descendents of Logical Positivism.

[2] See A. N. Whitehead, Modes of Thought, New York: Macmillan and Company, 1938, p. 184. (hereafter abbreviated M.T.)

> When we run over Libraries, persuaded of these principles what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance--let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.[1]

Analytic philosophers frequently point to this passage from Hume's Inquiry to support their views on the impossibility of metaphysics. From their point of view this "purple peroration"[2] appeared to settle the question of metaphysics once and for all. Coming as it does at the close of the Inquiry, in Hume's view the most acceptable of his philosophical works,[3] it has been regarded by many philosophers as both the quintessential expression of Humian philosophy and the final statement on the possibility of further metaphysical speculation. In this regard these philosophers appear to have been influenced by Kant's statement: "Since the origin of metaphysics so far as we know its history, nothing has happened which might have been more decisive to the fortunes of the science than the attack made upon it by David Hume."[1]

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[1] David Hume, An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding, ed. N. K. Smith, Indianapolis: Bobbs, Merrill and Company, 1955. (hereafter abbreviated Inq.)

[2] A. N. Flew first coined this term. (Hume's Philosophy of Belief, New York: Humanities Press, 1961, p. 270f.)

[3] E. C. Mossner effectively demonstrates Hume's disavowal of the Treatise for the Inquiry. (The Life of David Hume, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1954, p. 161f.)

In particular, the early positivist philosophers accepted Kant's interpretation as authoritative and viewed Hume as the direct antecedent of their doctrines. Thus J. R. Weinberg argued; "Many if not all, of the principal doctrines of contemporary positivism derive from Hume. In almost all respects Hume is intellectually closer to the philosophy of the Viennese Circle than is the author of the Cours de Philosophie Positive."[2] And later A. J. Ayer contended with reference to Hume's "purple peroration"; "What is this but a rhetorical version of our own thesis that a sentence which does not express either a formally true proposition or an empirical hypothesis is devoid of literal significance?"[3] More recently, even some of the Ordinary Language philosophers have pointed to Hume as the first exponent of their views. Thus H. H. Price asserts that Hume must be regarded as a great philosopher because of his discovery of the problem of induction. He suggests that Hume's treatment of the problem is like Wittgenstein's in that he "solves" the problem by "dissolving" it with his contention that induction is not an irrational, but a different order of enterprise.[1]

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[1] K. Kant, Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysic, trans. Mahaffy, p. 7.

[2] J. R. Weinberg, An Examination of Logical Positivism, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936, p. 3.

[3] A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, London: V. Gollancz, Ltd., 1936, p. 54.

What all these assessments of Hume share is a preoccupation with Hume's sensationalist epistemology and the scepticism which appears to be its major consequence. Their consensus has been that the thrust of Hume's attack required the development of the Kantian synthetic a priori as well as the various reformulations of that movement in philosophy which were propounded by nineteenth and twentieth century philosophers. It would be foolish to argue with that conclusion directly. Hume's scepticism demands some response and in the main Kant's answer and the later responses in a similar vein appear to be legitimate and well-considered replies to this side of Hume.

However, my own reading of Hume convinced me at a rather early date that Hume is a much more complex figure than tradition has made him out to be. And while it is certainly true that scepticism occupies a significant role in his philosophy, I have come to hold the view that it is incorrect to assume that it is the quintessence of his philosophy. In particular there appears to be a more constructive side to Hume which, although frequently ambiguous and confused, might be regarded as a complement to and a mitigating influence upon the force of his scepticism.

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[1] H. H. Price, "The Permanent Significance of Hume's Philosophy," Philosophy, 1940, p. 30f.

I was happy to discover that this tentatively held opinion of mine was not a solitary one. Thus I read with interest an article first presented in Mind by Norman Kemp Smith as early as 1905.[1] In this article Kemp Smith takes issue with the dominant estimate of Hume and contends "that the establishment of a purely naturalistic conception of human nature by the thorough subordination of reason to feeling and instinct is the determining factor in Hume's philosophy."[2] Kemp Smith also argues that Hume's analysis of the self, in which he regards it as essentially a bundle of disconnected perceptions, is unfairly treated when it is contrasted only with Kant.[3] Instead Hume's views, says Kemp Smith, ought to be compared with those of his predecessors, Locke and Berkeley, because there appears to be "much in the Treatise not to be found anywhere in Locke or Berkeley and his philosophy is throughout inspired by a new conception of knowledge."[4] Kemp Smith spends some energy in attempting to bring to the surface just what this new conception of knowledge might be. He concludes that it revolves essentially around Hume's treatment of belief, a discussion which if taken seriously cannot help but mitigate some of the stringency of Hume's scepticism. Kemp Smith contends: "By his predecessors belief had been regarded as purely intellectual, dependent on insight and therefore at the mercy of the philosophical sceptic; whereas, if Hume's teaching is true, it does not result from knowledge but precedes it, and as it is not caused by knowledge, so also is not destroyed by doubt."[1] Kemp Smith concludes therefore that the conventional understanding of Hume's sceptical account of the importance of reason must be reconsidered. While it is apparent to Kemp Smith that Hume placed greater emphasis upon the role of belief in shaping our views about the external world, Kemp Smith does not suggest that reason is to be replaced by belief in Hume. On the contrary, reason is still required as a complement to belief because its generalizing powers are necessary for the interpretation and control of belief.[2]

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[1] N. K. Smith, "The Naturalism of David Hume," Mind, April, 1905, pp. 149-76.

[2] Ibid., p. 150. [3] Ibid., p. 154.

[4] Ibid., p. 155.

In this regard Kemp Smith appears to have caught a new glimpse of the relationship between Hume and Kant because he concludes this article with the remark that Hume's distinction between the synthesizing, interpretive role of reason and the role of belief seems comparable to Kant's distinction between reason and the understanding.[3] In summary, Kemp Smith appears to have turned the tables on the conventional estimate of Hume by suggesting that he was not Kant's adversary but his predecessor for there appears to be much in Hume's new conception of knowledge which is identical with Kant's

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[1] Ibid., p. 165. [2] Ibid., p. 169.

[3] Ibid.

Copernican revolution.[1]

However that conclusion about the relationship between Hume and Kant does not appear nearly as significant as Kemp Smith's earlier remark that Hume needs to be contrasted not with Kant but with his predecessors, Locke and Berkeley. For that remark attacks more directly the orthodox dogma that Hume is merely the logical conclusion of the empiricism first formulated by Locke and Berkeley. The importance of this new assessment of the relationship between Locke, Berkeley, and Hume is further supported in Kemp Smith's, The Philosophy of David Hume, which appeared some thirty-five years after the article cited above.

In that book Kemp Smith gives diligent attention to the relationship between Hume and his predecessors. There Kemp Smith concludes that Hume is more directly influenced by Hutcheson and Newton than by Locke and Berkeley, and while it is evident that Hume borrows from Locke regarding his theory of the origin of ideas, Kemp Smith argues that his intention was to modify Locke rather than to advance his argument. Kemp Smith also places great emphasis here upon the role of belief in Hume, a direction which is consistent with his first article. He takes some pains to demonstrate how the beliefs are regarded by Hume as the fundamental influences upon human understanding, formative of all our opinions about identity, morality, causality, and perception.

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[1] Ibid., p. 155.

We shall deal in greater detail with Kemp Smith's reassessment of Hume in the course of this study. But for the present it seems necessary only to point to the considerable influence which this reevaluation of Hume has had upon Humian interpreters. In the past two decades a number of authors have confessed their agreement with Kemp Smith's reassessment. Among them are A. G. N. Flew in his book, Hume's Philosophy of Belief; J. A. Passmore's excellent book, Hume's Intentions; works by Hume's biographer, E. C. Mossner; and others.[1]

Needless to say, this reassessment must have as its most immediate consequence the reshaping of this stereotype of Hume shared by philosophers of many persuasions. However its more immediate relevance for this study can be seen in the possibility of reevaluating the distance which separates Whiteheadian thinkers from the more dominant trend in Anglo-American philosophy, at least with regard to the manner in which the history of philosophy is viewed. Concretely, if it can be granted that Kemp Smith is correct in his assessment that "the thorough subordination of reason to feeling and instinct is the determining factor in Hume's philosophy," then the way is cleared for understanding the Whiteheadian comment, "the basis of experience is emotional"[2] in terms of a new historical perspective. In short, if Hume is regarded from another perspective as not only a sceptic but as also a philosopher who saw fit to bring to the surface the significance of certain subjective epistemological elements, such as feelings and beliefs, in order to survey their cognitive significance, then it is perhaps possible to suggest some new connections between the philosophy of the forefather of Analytic thought and Whiteheadian modes of thinking.

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[1] For a more complete discussion of this new interpretation and the effect which it has had upon Humian philosophers see A. G. N. Flew, op. cit., p. 260f.

[2] A. N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, New York: Macmillan and Company, 1933, p. 178. (Hereafter abbreviated A.I.)

2. The Whiteheadian Misapprehension and Its Consequences

However, if it was hoped that the drawing of these new connections would be an easy task we are soon disappointed. For Whitehead seems fairly consistent in his discussion of the disagreement which he finds between his views and Hume's. Furthermore Whiteheadians have been hardly conciliatory in their repeated expressions of disagreement with both the philosophers of the Analytic schools and their predecessor, David Hume.[1]

I say Whitehead has been fairly consistent in his statements regarding Hume. Perhaps this qualification is necessary because there are instances which might indicate Whitehead's disagreement with the stereotyped view of Hume, but for the most part such instances do not seem to have led

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[1] Perhaps this repeated expression of difference is becoming a thing of the past. In two recent journals, the Southern Journal of Philosophy, Winter, 1969-70, and the new Process Studies, Spring, 1971, several articles appeared which attempted to trace the connection between Whitehead and Analytic philosophies. In a private conversation in August, 1971, C. Hartshorne said many of his differences were now passe.

Whitehead to take a position in any manner like that of Norman Kemp Smith regarding Hume. Thus in the preface to *Process and Reality*, Whitehead speaks of his surprise at his discovery that his views so nearly coincide with the views of the prominent philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Descartes, Newton, Locke, Hume, Kant. Whitehead remarks,

> I started the investigation with the expectation of being occupied with the exposition of the divergencies from every member of this group. But a careful examination of their exact statements disclosed that in the main the philosophy of organism is a recurrence to pre-Kantian modes of thought.[1]

In actuality it appears that Whitehead's "recurrence" shows more marked affinity for Locke than it does for any of the other members of this group. And Whitehead says as much; "The writer who most fully anticipated the main positions of the philosophy of organism is John Locke in his *Essay*, especially in its later books."[2]

Throughout the remainder of *Process and Reality* and indeed through much of the Whiteheadian corpus Locke is almost universally regarded from a positive point of view and Hume is treated as the sceptical successor and systematizer of Locke's works.[3] Thus for the most part the picture

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1 [1] A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, New York: Macmillan and Company, 1929, p. vi. (Hereafter abbreviated P.R.)

[2] P.R., p. v.

[3] An interesting example is Whitehead's discussion of the relation between Hume and Locke concerning the notion of power. (See P.R., p. 88f.)

of Hume which appears in Whitehead is essentially a negative one. For example, in Modes of Thought Whitehead talks of Hume's contribution to philosophy, especially when conjoined with Newton's, as "gravely defective" because it "omits those aspects of the Universe as experienced and of our modes of experiencing, which jointly lead to the more penetrating ways of understanding."[1] In another place in this same work Whitehead remarks about his aversion for the Humian doctrine in epistemology which bases itself upon clear sensations. He concludes that the philosophy of organism constitutes a denial of such a doctrine,[2] and that in fact his philosophy "exactly inverts Hume's point of view, and the variant points of view derived from his doctrines."[3] In Adventures of Ideas, Whitehead speaks of Hume's atomism as the basis for contemporary positivism,[4] of the errors of Hume's sensationalism,[5] and of his intention to "evade Hume's deduction from philosophical tradition" in order to put forward a defense of dualism more closely akin to Plato, Descartes, and Locke.[6]

A familiar theme runs through all of these remarks of Whitehead. In his opinion, Hume's philosophy is essentially a form of sensationalism which is preoccupied with the discussion of reality in terms of the clarity and distinctness of our sense perceptions. With these criteria firmly in view scepticism can be the only outcome. Thus Whitehead seems to have imbibed the conventional hypothesis regarding the quintessence of Hume's philosophy. However as we stated above, it would be incorrect to assign such an opinion to Whitehead without qualification. There are instances where Whitehead remarks about the seeming absence of sensationalism in Hume. For example in Modes of Thought he discusses the criterion of clarity and distinctness of sense perceptions employed by both Descartes and Hume and then concludes: "The immense value of the philosophic discussion produced by Descartes and by Hume, arises from the fact that neither of them consistently followed this formula."[1] Or in another place in this same work he remarks that in the course of his argument Hume showed a penchant for forgetting his sensationalist premises. But Whitehead concludes: "But in his controversy with antagonistic modes of thought, he judges them by the strict consequences of these premises."[2]

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[1] M.T., p. 185.

[2] M.T., p. 152.

[3] M.T., p. 162

[4] A.I., p. 129.

[5] A.I., p. 221f.

[6] A.I., p. 192.

Thus with some qualification, the picture of Hume which emerges from Whitehead's writings is a picture which coincides for the most part with the conventional stereotype of Hume. And perhaps the most significant evidence of the priority of this picture of Hume in Whitehead can be taken from recent remarks of Whiteheadians concerning Hume's direction. Thus Charles Hartshorne remarks in a recent article entitled, "Whitehead and Ordinary Language," concerning the gap between Whiteheadian metaphysics and linguistic analysis and suggests in rather polemical fashion that Whitehead's views regarding the connectedness of reality are "a long way from the sheer disconnectedness of experience and the rest of reality which Hume, Russell, and all too many others seem to affirm."[1] He further suggests that Whitehead's doctrine of prehensions is proposed as a "real answer to Hume on causality."[2] In the same manner an article by David Hall further reinforces the Whiteheadian image of the stereotyped assessment of Hume. Hall repeats the discussion about Hume's "purple peroration," seemingly as an indication of its priority in Humian philosophy, and then contends that "Hume erred in his supposition of the ultimacy of clearly presented sense experience."[3] Furthermore, according to Hall, this error is carried over into Kantian and Hegelian philosophy. The upshot of the perpetuation of this error and the thrust of Hall's article is that the disconnected Humian world is only capable of reunification in Whiteheadian terms. Hall contends that Whitehead's "synoptic vision" which stems from his theory of abstraction provides an antidote to the positivism which originates in Hume.[1] Thus the way is opened for a new sense of cultural unity, a reunification of the intellectual disciplines.

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[1] M.T., p. 155. [2] M.T., p. 167.

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[1] C. Hartshorne, loc. cit., Southern Journal of Philosophy, Winter, 1969-70, p. 438.

[2] Ibid.

[3] D. Hall, "Whitehead's Theory of Cultural Interests," Southern Journal of Philosophy, Winter, 1969-70, p. 459.

I have no quarrel with Hall's conclusion. His assessment of the possibility for a wholistic understanding of the task of philosophy as a result of Whitehead's contribution to metaphysics is correct in my estimate. The unfortunate aspect of Hall's article is that his own conviction of the novel superiority of Whitehead's vision leads him to emphasize the discontinuity between Whitehead and other philosophical points of view. Thus his conclusions are paradoxical because he advances Whitehead's "synoptic vision" in polemical fashion in rejection of other attempts at synopsis.

But Hall is not alone in this tactic. A number of Whiteheadians have made similar comments about the novelty of Whitehead's metaphysics, a novelty which sets Whitehead apart from the mainstream of Anglo-American philosophy. The immediate consequence is that the possibility for some rapprochement is lost in this assertion of the de novo character of Whitehead's contribution.

It is not the contention of this thesis that there are immediate prospects for such a detente, though perhaps the picture is brighter than it was even a few years ago.

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[1] Ibid., p. 472.

However, it does seem clear that a more accurate assessment of the traditional differences which separate Whiteheadian metaphysics from Analytic modes of thinking might smooth the way for such discussions. One step along this way might be provided by a reconsideration of the parting of the ways of these two modes of thought as it appears in Hume's philosophy. It is our contention that Whiteheadians have misapprehended Hume. In Whiteheadian terminology they have prehended only one side of Hume's contribution to the history of philosophy, namely the stereotyped interpretation of Hume's sensationalism. To be sure Analytic philosophers, in so far as they subscribe to the stereotype of Hume, are guilty of the same misapprehension. But this study is not concerned to place blame so much as it is to discuss the consequences of this misapprehension. And in that regard the consequences affect Whiteheadians perhaps more immediately than their Analytic colleagues. For Whiteheadians contend that the wholistic vision provided by process modes of thought prepares the way for a more inclusive estimate of the task of philosophy. However the Whiteheadian neglect of this alternative interpretation of Hume has meant that some of the more intriguing connections between Whitehead and this figure, regarded by many as the forefather of Analytic modes of thought, have been ignored. Thus Whiteheadians have been prevented from perceiving a continuity which might prove useful in their concern for inclusiveness.

3. Intentions of This Essay

Lest this discussion of rapprochement between two modes of thought which have shown no little disagreement between one another in the past imply that this study is being conducted with some lack of restraint, or an attitude of temerity, perhaps some disclaimers are in order. First it should be clear that this reassessment of David Hume does not intend to set the traditional treatment of him on its head. The reaction to Hume's scepticism was not wholly mistaken. Some of his conclusions are clearly sceptical and in so far as philosophy has a concern to state the role of pure reason clearly and precisely, the Kantian response seems necessary. What is demanded is that the awareness of this scepticism not blind philosophers to other intriguing elements in Hume's philosophy, elements which permit us to see new continuities between Hume and later philosophers.

Secondly it is not our contention that Whiteheadian philosophy errs greatly in its assessment of Hume. There is no fundamental correction in the Whiteheadian scheme which appears as a result of the reassessment. What is being suggested is that the adequacy of Whitehead's vision may be more clearly perceived if the continuities between Whitehead and this figure whose influence on contemporary Analytic philosophy is so great can be more clearly conceived. Thus this study is not inimical to Whitehead, on the contrary it would appear to be entirely consistent with the Whiteheadian "synoptic vision."

The thesis will proceed in the following manner. First we will treat Kemp Smith's and others discussion of the problem of Humian interpretation, showing how the neglect of certain elements in Hume led him to be misinterpreted. Next we will undertake a survey of some central Humian doctrines with Hume's "purple peroration" in mind, showing how Hume's transgression of the limits of the requirements there stated must result in the reassessment of the statement that this passage from the Inquiry is the quintessence of Hume. Thirdly, we will examine Whitehead's charge against Hume that he is a strict sensationalist and show how such a charge may be overturned by an alternative view of Hume. And finally we will discuss some continuities between Whitehead and Hume which appear as a result of this reassessment.

Perhaps a word of explanation regarding a certain uniqueness of format is in order as well. Because the central theme of this dissertation constitutes an appeal for a reconsideration of the traditional interpretation of Hume, there is a certain repetitiveness in this essay. Let it be said in advance that it was not my intention to adopt such a style. Certainly it would have been easier to ask whether Hume is truly a sensationalist and to settle the matter in straightforward fashion. However Hume's own complex style prevents such straightforward analysis. While his philosophical efforts were certainly comprehensive, they were not systematic. The failure to recognize this fact alone has, no doubt, been the cause of much misinterpretation. Philosophers have too easily assumed that he presented only a systematic exposition of the sceptical consequences of a sensationalist epistemology. Hume did provide such an exposition, but it was hardly systematic. Furthermore in the interstices of this exposition are contained certain other, more constructive, conclusions which also follow from these sensationalist premises, or which are demanded if empiricism is to be adequate. It is this constructive element to which we shall continually recur. But such repetition seems necessary if one is to truly understand this alternative direction in Hume.

Chapter Two -- The Problem of Humian Interpretation

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1. The Problem of the "Authentic Hume"

Hume is popularly regarded as one of the more lucid philosophers in the history of Western thought. Yet when one attempts to look beyond his apparently translucent prose to the presuppositions which underlie it, one discovers a complexity which has led such figures as I. A. Selby-Bigge, the editor of Hume's Treatise, to suggest that Hume is every bit as complex as Hegel.[1]

The question then arises concerning what one is to make of this intriguing opacity. Scores of philosophers have offered their version of the "authentic Hume," by emphasizing certain of his doctrines at the expense of others, and thus they have attempted to place Hume within a single, consistent philosophical framework. However, as J. A. Passmore[2] shows with such clarity, if we attempt to demonstrate that, in truth, Hume is really a phenomenalist, or a sceptic, or some type of disguised natural philosopher, and that those sections of his work which do not coincide with such a single-minded interpretation are "simply slips of the pen"; then, says Passmore, "we shall have to admit that his 'slips' are of gigantic proportions."[3]

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[1] L. A. Selby-Bigge, ed. A Treatise of Human Nature, 1888 edition, cited by J. A. Passmore, Hume's Intentions, Cambridge: University Press, 1952, p. 2. (Hereafter abbreviated Tr.)

[2] J. A. Passmore, op. cit., p. 2.

[3] Ibid.

What then do we make of such "slips"? Was Hume essentially a philosophical *enfant terrible* who cared little about philosophical consistency and whose sole intention was the dismemberment of theological and philosophical orthodoxy? Or were his intentions more constructive, less sceptical? And finally, how can any of these questions be dealt with, without committing the same error of pigeonholing Hume which Passmore so stringently condemns?

Perhaps one clue to the way in which such questions can be answered can be taken from an analysis of works which make the mistake which Passmore condemns. Interestingly, some of those figures who disregard Passmore's caution[1] also evidence a considerable neglect, or exhibit only a superficial understanding of Hume's historical context. Thus, perhaps the most profitable first step would be an investigation of Hume's intellectual milieu as well as an account of his reaction to it.

However before undertaking such an historical survey it should be noted with some clarity that a discussion of Hume's intellectual antecedents still leaves much to conjecture. True Scotsman that he was, Hume was exceedingly tight-lipped about his intellectual creditors. To complicate matters further, Hume also evidences a fascination

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[1] See T. H. Green's, "Introduction" to Hume's *Treatise*, London: 1874. Green regards Hume solely as the unfortunate empirical predecessor of J. S. Mill; or F. Zabeeh's *Hume, Precursor of Modern Empiricism* which rests its case upon a discussion of the congruity between certain of Hume's comments and those of the Vienna Circle.

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with philosophical innovation, his "new scene of thought" which is difficult to assign to any specific philosophical antecedent.

Thus the "authentic Hume" defies discovery. That figure who was influenced by Locke and Berkeley and in turn awakened Kant from his dogmatic slumbers turns out to be a retrospective creation of what some philosophers would like to believe about Hume. It is simply impossible to point to one of the figures whose views share a common theme with Hume and to suggest a causal influence between them. The situation is far too complex to admit such simple comparisons. Hopefully, some discussion of that very complexity will allow us to piece together the parts of the puzzle which are still extant; though, admittedly, the entire picture will never be free of gaps and lost connections.

The succeeding historical investigation will proceed as follows: First, we will examine the heterogeneity and rampant inconsistency of the eighteenth century mind as a means of introducing the complexity of the problem of Humian interpretation. Secondly, some attention will be given to Norman Kemp Smith's account of how this heterogeneity and inconsistency led Hume to be incorrectly interpreted as the simple successor of Locke and Berkeley. Next, we will discuss Hume's own rejection of Locke and Berkeley. And finally, we shall consider in some detail some additional figures whose views Hume found appealing and who must be understood if Hume's context is to be truthfully comprehended.

Of course, before we undertake such an historical investigation it should be well understood that this does not alter the direction of the present study. Its primary intentions are analytical, not historical. However, in order to corroborate the claim that Hume has been misapprehended it becomes necessary to trace the origin of this misapprehension back to its roots as well as to attempt to place Hume more firmly in his own milieu. Thus perhaps it can be stated that adequate philosophic analysis must presuppose some effort at historical understanding. At least this would appear to be the lesson learned from the works which fall under Passmore's condemnation.

2. The Eighteenth Century Background

Perhaps "enlightenment," the term so frequently applied to this epoch is a misnomer. Without a doubt the age was brilliant. As Basil Willey so eloquently put it, "At last, across the vast gulf of the monkish and deluded past, one could salute the ancients from an eminence perhaps as lofty as their own."[1] Furthermore, this was an age which was conscious of its own brilliance. Figures like Voltaire and Chastellux were unsparing in their praise of the age's accomplishments.[1] However, such self-conscious enthusiasm is misleading for it frequently evokes the impression that this was an era of single-minded progress. The veils of superstition and ignorance had been stripped away. Truth was once more accessible to all men by virtue of the clear light of reason.

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[1] Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, p. 1.

While it is true that much rhetoric of this type was employed to characterize the age, one needs to be chary of being too readily convinced by such enthusiasm. History indicates that all too often the clear light of reason illuminates several paths. Its testimony is frequently equivocal. Thus Basil Willey suggests that perhaps the eighteenth century can be regarded as a necessary stage or climacteric in the life cycle of Western civilization, but that its necessity stems not so much from the single-minded impetus to the upward striving of man which it provided as it does from an awakening to the manifold powers of reason itself. Thus Willey argues that this was a period in which "illumination became dark with excessive light, and reason was used to reveal the limitations of reason."[2]

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[1] Voltaire reportedly remarked; "Well nigh the whole of Europe has changed its attitude in the last fifty years." Trait de la Tolerance. Chastellux admonished; "You who are living and especially you who are starting to live in the eighteenth century should think yourselves lucky and rejoice." De la Felicite Publique. Cited by Paul Hazard, European Thought in the Eighteenth Century, Meridian Books, New York: 1963, p. 276.

[2] Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 111.

Perhaps the eighteenth century might be more aptly characterized as a period of increasing heterogeneity, although it was a heterogeneity which was not always self-conscious. Leslie Stephen states the problem clearly when he says:

> Heterogenous elements are so united, that it is not only difficult to discover their existence, but almost impossible to indicate it plainly in a continuous narrative... Men, who are really working with the forces of disintegration, believe in the most entire good faith that they are supporting the established order. It is not an easy task to unravel these opposing currents of thought and feeling, or to discover the logic implied in unreasoning impulses, and the unconscious tendencies which would have been disavowed if plainly brought before the consciousness.[1]

Examples of the peculiar inconsistency abound. In the area of manners and morals modes of behavior which might evoke horrified indignation when practiced by some individuals were regarded with blase acceptance when evidenced by others.[2] Some who prided themselves on their cosmopolitanism, om occasion, did not shrink from the most myopic chauvinism on others. Hume, himself, professed an admiration for French sophistication and eclecticism and was regarded by Parisian society as "le bon David," the truly cosmopolitan man of letters. But at the same time Hume's revulsion for the English was well known.[1]

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[1] Leslie Stephen, English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, London: 1876, Vol. II. p. 334.

[2] Thus Rousseau was maligned for openly keeping a mistress but the King of England was permitted to exercise considerable indiscretion. It is reported that when Queen Caroline lay dying she urged George II to marry again. Weeping he replied, "No, I shall have mistresses." To which the Queen is reported to have responded, "Well, that need not stand in the way." Paul Hazard, European Thought in the Eighteenth Century, New York: Meridian Books, 1963, p. 254.

Nowhere is this fundamental heterogeneity more evident than in the conflicting attitudes expressed toward the divergent claims of reason and divine revelation. This was the era of a newly discovered romance between man and nature. Robinson Crusoe had become the paradigm of the eighteenth century man, says Willey, for he epitomized rational-economic man pitting his resources against the universe successfully by working in harmony with nature; quite a contrast to Dante's ascent from the Inferno guided by reason and grace, or Bunyan's Pilgrim struggling along under his burden of sin.[2] Ernst Cassirer remarks that in the minds of many Newton was regarded as the culmination of a direction begun by Galileo when he projected a truth alongside divine revelation which is represented more clearly in mathematical symbols than it could be presented through words of Scripture.[3] Alexander Pope's "Epitaph on Sir Isaac Newton," ("And God said 'Let Newton be.' And there was light.") may have been composed in a satirical vein, but many regarded the implications behind this euphemism as unquestionable.

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[1] It should be noted that Hume's Anglo-phobia was exacerbated by the treatment he received at the hands of Samuel Johnson who dismissed Hume because he was Scottish. E. C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 413f.

[2] Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 17.

[3] Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, Boston: Beacon Press, 1955, p. 41.

Incredibly, many of these same individuals talked about revelation as if there were no conflict between its demands and those of scientific investigation. Newton himself maintained his orthodoxy until the last and attempted to overlook any conflicts between his scientific principles and those of the Scriptures. Dryden, who with Pope, was regarded as the laureate of the day, stated this compromising point of view in his "Religio Laici."

> These truths are not the product of thy Mind
> But dropt from Heaven, and of a Nobler Kind.
> Reveal'd Religion first inform'd thy Sight.
> And reason saw not till Faith Sprung the Light.
> Hence all the Natural Worship takes the Source:
> "Tis Revelation what thou thinkst Discourse.[1]

In this light it is not surprising then to read Bishop Butler's argument for the veracity of revelation in his Analogy of Religion which was premised upon the notion that the truths of revelation should be accepted with the same credulity as those of scientific investigation because the truths of the former were no less bewildering than those of the latter. As Butler put it, "The system of revealed religion is not subject to ridicule, unless that of nature be so too."[2] Pascal carried these same views to their logical conclusion when he insisted that he found only terror in the thought of interstellar space and thus it must be admitted that nature could decisively demonstrate the existence of God only to one who already believed.[1]

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[1] cited in Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 81.

[2] Ibid.

This controversy between reason and revelation appeared amongst theologians in terms of the possibility of _a priori_ as opposed to _a posteriori_ foundations for religion. Samuel Clarke, Newton's theological lieutenant, championed the former. Taking his departure from Newton's mathematics, but influenced as well by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, he attempted to advance the case for religion as an essentially rational enterprise resting upon certain immutable axioms. Joseph Butler was the spokesman for the _a posteriori_ point of view. Confessing his indebtedness to Newton's empirical method and to Locke as well, Butler's position eventually led to Paley's empirical school of theology at Cambridge. Although the controversy was taken with considerable seriousness by theologians of the time, the issues which separated Butler and Clarke do not seem so profound today.[2] Apparently the profundity of the debate was lost upon most of the clergymen of the time as well for many of them took ridiculous positions in their attempt to walk an intelligent middle path between Butler and Clarke.[1]

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[1] _Ibid._, p. 8.

[2] Apparently Hume maintained a similar attitude toward Butler and Clarke if Mossner's point of view can be granted. Mossner argues that these two figures serve as the models for Demea and Cleanthes in Hume's _Dialogues_. See E. C. Mossner, _Mind_, 1936, p. 335.

The fact that Newton could serve as the originating impulse for two opposing understandings of the foundation of religion points to yet another complexity of the age, a heterogeneity in Newton's philosophy itself. On the one hand Newton clearly undercuts the foundations for the old Cartesian metaphysic which, say Cassirer, was founded upon the motto: "Give me matter and I will build you a world."[2] In contrast to this rationalistic point of view Newton demonstrated that physics couldn't be reduced to geometry. One cannot just begin with assumptions about things, no matter how rational they appear, and then proceed to interpret all facts in terms of these assumptions. No, Newton contended one must first begin with empirical knowledge. Thus, says Cassirer, Newton's "rules of philosophizing" are regarded as the replacement for the Cartesian Discourse on Method. One must start with empirical data, not airy and speculative hypotheses.[3]

However, the irony is that though Newton was applauded, particularly in England, for his departure from the Cartesian a priori the explication of Newton's natural laws which was attempted by Newton's followers landed them in the same rationalistic dilemma from which Newton had just extricated philosophy. Mary Shaw Kuypers suggests that in spite of Newton's rejection of Cartesian metaphysics, the eventual thrust of Newtonian science was to culminate in "superempirical entities as remote from scientific fact as the Cartesian vortices."[1] In sum, the enthusiastic appropriation of Newton by philosophers and theologians of disparate persuasions is dramatic evidence that this was an age of experiment rather than analysis. It is no mistake that Samuel Johnson was regarded by his contemporaries as the outstanding English man of letters. Here was a man, says Stephen, whose diminished analytic ability frequently allowed him to espouse views which were often conservative in the extreme and frequently little more than sickly sentiment.[2] Stephen characterizes the age well when he remarks

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[1] Hume's clerical friend, Hugh Blair, is an interesting example. In one sermon he apparently professed his liberality when he proclaimed: "We call you not to renounce pleasure but to enjoy it in safety." Stephen concludes that Blair was "a mere washed-out retailer of second-hand commonplaces who gives us the impression that the real man has vanished and left nothing but a wig and a gown." Stephen, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 346.

[2] E. Cassirer, op. cit., p. 51.

[3] Ibid.

> ...old theory broke down by actual experiment before any perception of its logical invalidity disturbed men's minds. Men's sentiments became daily more heterogenous, until at last the necessity of reducing the chaos by a reconstruction of the underlying philosophy forced itself upon the acutest minds.[3]

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[1] Mary Shaw Kuypers, Studies in the Eighteenth Century Background of Hume's Empiricism, New York: Russell and Russell, 1966, p. 17.

[2] Leslie Stephen, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 206.

[3] Ibid., p. 381.

Certainly David Hume must be regarded as one of those acute minds who recognized the impending breakdown. Clearly, at least one of his aims was to reduce the chaos by means of an altogether new construction of the foundations. However, it must also be recognized that in spite of his brilliance, Hume was also a figure of his day who was therefore subject to the same confusion which produced the chaos. But perhaps that fact will become clearer as we examine Hume's own response to his heterogenous era.

3. The Interpretation of Hume's Relation to the Eighteenth Century: The History of an Oversimplification

As we indicated at the outset of this study, it is no easy task to elicit Hume's own understanding of the central direction and purpose of his philosophy when it is viewed within the context of the eighteenth century milieu. This difficulty has not prevented the development of a rather simple and widely accepted interpretation of Hume's relation to his own era. Our present understanding of the eighteenth century mind causes us to accept such easy interpretations with only the greatest caution. It seems all too evident that the conventional understanding of Hume's relation to his era has not been formulated with equal caution.

The popular understanding of Hume's relation to his era revolves around the notion that as one of the "British Empiricists" Hume was a disciple of Locke and Berkeley and that his relation to his era, as well as his position in the history of philosophy, can best be understood in terms of his pressing of the empiricist theory of the origin of ideas to its final ultimate conclusion, scepticism. This a simple conclusion which has the weight of two centuries of philosophical opinion clearly in its favor.

However, as we have already observed, such simple conclusions about eighteenth century thought should be regarded with some suspicion. Hume's philosophy does not permit easy generalizations. Therefore a careful investigation of the origin of the popular understanding of Hume seems clearly indicated if we are to get to the root of the problem of understanding his relation to his time. Norman Kemp Smith suggests that the originative impulse for the popular opinion of Hume appeared in the eighteenth century interpretation of him. But this fact alone should be ample cause for caution, given the peculiar pathology of that era.

Kemp Smith contends that Thomas Reid, a popular but not particularly astute philosopher is immediately responsible for the eighteenth century view of Hume. Reid assumes that Hume is no more than the contemporary exponent of Locke's doctrine of ideas, a doctrine which he held can have nothing but disastrous consequences.

> May we not reasonably judge so from what has happened? Des Cartes no sooner began to dig in this mine, than scepticism was ready to break in upon him. He did what he could to shut it out. Malebranche and Locke, who dug deeper, found the difficulty of keeping out this enemy still to increase... Then Berkeley, who carried on the work, despairing of securing all, bethought himself of an expedient:--- By giving up the material world, which he thought

> might be spared without loss, and even with advantage, he hoped, by an impregnable partition, to secure the world of spirits. But alas! the Treatise of Human Nature wantonly sapped the foundation of this partition and drowned all in one universal deluge... The (author of the Treatise) proceeds upon the same principles (as Berkeley), but carries them to their full length; as the Bishop undid the whole material world, this author, upon the same grounds, undoes the world of spirits, and leaves nothing in nature but ideas and impressions, without any subject on which they may be impressed.[1]

Although Reid can hardly be regarded as a major philosophical figure, his words did have considerable impact. So much so that his interpretation of Hume passed largely unquestioned and only served to stimulate yet more vituperative responses from other individuals like James Beattie, who, though like Reid a minor philosopher, was given an authority disproportionate to his philosophical ability because of the attention afforded him by Samuel Johnson. Beatties' response to Hume can be viewed as little more than invective.

> Those unnatural productions, the vile effusion of a hard heart, that mistakes its own restlessness for the activity of genius, and its own captiousness for sagacity of understanding, may, like other monsters, please a while by their singularity; but the charm is soon over and the succeeding age will be astonished to hear, that their forefathers were deluded, or amused, with such fooleries.[2]

Evidently both Reid and Beattie failed to understand

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[1] Thomas Reid, Works, ed. W. Hamilton, p. 91, cited by N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 5.

[2] James Beattie, Essay on the Nature of Truth, cited by N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 7.

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the pluralism of the age. Their fears of scepticism were so pronounced that they completely overlooked any possible positive contributions which Hume's philosophy might have to make. This fact would not be particularly lamentable if the anti-analytic pathology of the age had not been so pervasive. The interpretation of these two figures conveyed so much influence that it was carried over into the nineteenth century and continued to prove persuasive to many philosophers.[1] One indication of its persuasiveness can be taken from T. H. Green's Introduction to Hume and Locke, which appeared for the first time in 1874. Green merely repeats Reid's condemnation of Hume for pursuing an ultimately futile direction. Albeit his rejoinder is somewhat milder in tone.

> It (philosophy founded upon the Locke-Berkeley empiricism) has been unprofitable because its representatives have persisted in philosophising upon principles which Hume had pursued to their legitimate issue and had shown, not as the enemy but as their advocate, to render all philosophy futile.[2]

Surprisingly, even Leslie Stephen who, unlike Green, had no polemical axe to grind,[3] fell prey to this understanding of Hume. He assumes that Hume is primarily the descendent of Berkeley and Locke and that Hume's fundamental sim is the dismemberment of all traditional philosophy by pushing the doctrine of his forebears to their ultimate conclusion.

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[1] Beattie's scathing criticism apparently failed to convince Kant, however, in spite of the fact that it was he who first introduced Kant to Hume. See Ibid., p. 7f. (This might lead one to conjecture that the cause of the misinterpretation of Hume might be attributed to the absence of any of his compatriots possessed of sufficient brilliance to truly understand Hume.)

[2] T. H. Green, op. cit., p. 2

[3] Green was a British Hegelian who saw little merit in Empiricism whether it was espoused by Hume or by his own contemporary, J. S. Mill.

> Chance, instead of order, must, it would seem to be the ultimate objective fact, as custom, instead of reason, is the ultimate subjective fact. We have reached, it is plain, the fullest expression of scepticism, and are not surprised when Hume admits that his doubts disappear when he leaves his study. The old bonds which held things together have been completely dissolved. Hume can see no way to replace them, and Hume, therefore, is a systematic sceptic.[1]

These are remarkable words from Stephen, since his intention was to set forth an historical treatment of the development of English thought, an achievement which Norman Kemp Smith regards, with the exception of his understanding of Hume, as being without equal.[2]

Perhaps if figures like Stephen could be so easily misled, there can be some excuse for the misunderstanding of Hume which continues to be broadcast by both popular opinion and even some of the more noteworthy philosophical luminaries of our own day.[3] Fortunately, for the sake of Hume, as well as the state of philosophy, the development of historical scholarship has allowed us to understand the pluralism of the eighteenth century with greater clarity. Thus we are able to evaluate with greater care an interpretation of Hume which obviously takes its departure from the opinions of individuals who could hardly be regarded as unbiased.

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[1] Leslie Stephen, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 43f.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 81.

[3] See Bertrand Russell's, History of Western Philosophy, p. 685. "...He (Hume) developed to its logical conclusion the empirical philosophy of Locke and Berkeley, and by making it self-consistent made it incredible."

In the past three decades an utterly new interpretation of Hume's relation to this period has come to the fore articulated first by Norman Kemp Smith and seconded ten years later by J. A. Passmore in his excellent book, Hume's Intentions. Let us now turn to an examination of the foundation for this new understanding of Hume.

4. Hume's Relation to Locke and Berkeley

As indicated in Chapter one, the thesis of Kemp Smith's new interpretation of Hume rests upon a re-examination of the popular notion that Hume was the brilliant and unconventional disciple of Locke and Berkeley. Kemp Smith contends that such a conclusion should be regarded with suspicion. But does this implied separation of Hume's philosophy from the views of Locke and Berkeley really clarify his position in the eighteenth-century thought world? If it can be granted that the conclusion that Hume follows Locke's footsteps up to and over the brink of the sceptical abyss is an oversimplification, what is the nature of Hume's relation to Locke? Another way of putting the question: if Hume is to be regarded as a sceptic, and regardless of his relation to his predecessors it seems clear that he subscribes to some type of scepticism, is this scepticism the result of the influence of Locke and Berkeley or does it have some other origin?

In spite of the absence of first-hand information about Hume's intentions, we do have some scattered comments which he made about his intellectual struggles which can shed some light on this problem. In a letter which Hume wrote to his physician at a crucial period of his life, during the time in which he was composing the first edition of the Treatise, he makes some remarks which offer some insight into the process of his intellectual development. Apparently Hume had suffered from a sceptical kind of melancholy for some five years. His description of that experience provides evidence that his scepticism was not wholly engendered by his perception of the consequences of the Lockian theory of ideas.

> After much Study, and Reflection this, at last when I was about 18 years of Age, there seem'd to be open'd up to me a new Scene of Thought, which transported me beyond Measure, and made me, with an Ardor natural to young men, throw up every other Pleasure or Business to apply entirely to it... I was infinitely happy in this Course of Life for some Months; till at last, about the beginning of September 1729, all my Ardor seem'd in a moment to be extinguisht, and I could no longer raise my Mind to that pitch, which formerly gave me such excessive Pleasure... There was another particular, which contributed more than any thing, to waste my Spirit and bring on me this Distemper, which was, that having read many books of Morality, such as Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch, and being smit with their beautiful Representations of Virtue and Philosophy, I undertook the improvement of my Temper and Will, along with my Reason and Understanding. I was continually fortifying myself with

> Reflections against Death, and Poverty, and Shame, and Pain, and all the other Calamities of Life[1]

Certainly such a long-standing and debilitating malady as the one Hume describes could not have been suffered as the disciple of Locke and Berkeley, philosophers who were widely known and whose views, though controversial to some, were everywhere discussed without the kinds of consequences which Hume suffered so dramatically. No, the emphasis here is upon the difficulty of maintaining the enthusiasm which was first occasioned by this "new scene." Surely Hume was bright enough to recognize that a mere systematizing of Locke could hardly be regarded as a novel contribution. In short Hume's initial enthusiasm for this new direction seems to indicate that he was himself marking out an utterly novel course in the history of philosophy; thus his melancholy scepticism as a consequence of his discovery of the difficulty of making this new direction intelligible. It also seems to result from Hume's discovery of the possible conflict between his new view of man and the classical view of man, whose virtues he found so appealing, but whose rationalistic foundation he found unacceptable.

But certainly it can be remarked that Hume shares with Locke and Berkeley a phenomenalist understanding of the origin of ideas. Some might contend that this fact alone might be sufficient evidence of Hume's apprenticeship to the first two British empiricists. However J. A. Passmore suggests that before accepting such a conclusion one should examine Hume's intentions in espousing such an apparent phenomenalism. The phenomenalist doctrine that Berkeley, in particular, subscribed to according to Passmore, was that "all our conjectures begin and end with appearances; that we cannot go behind or beyond these; and that we should not try to do so."[1] The problem with this position, says Passmore, is that it is the doctrine which Hume associated with the strict sceptics. And Hume was openly critical of such a deliberately limited epistemological field.[2] Hume admitted that he couldn't help attempting to go beyond such a position for he had hopes of uncovering "the secret springs and principles by which the human mind is actuated in its operation."[3] Thus Hume may be regarded as a phenomenalist, but only in the more limited sense of that term. He agreed that we couldn't know, with certainty, (an important qualification) anything more than the data provided by our sense perceptions. However when one considers the types of information which he receives from clear and unambiguous perceptions, says Hume, he discovers that the greater portion of our knowledge, in particular our knowledge of the causal relation, identity, and substance, has no such clear phenomenal foundation. So Hume advocates a limited phenomenalism, but only as a means of demonstrating the final inadequacy of a phenomenological epistemology.

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[1] D. Hume, The Letters of David Hume, ed. Grieg, pp. 13-14, cited by N. Kemp-Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 15.

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[1] J. A. Passmore, op. cit., p. 90.

[2] Inq., p. 167f. [3] Ibid., p. 24.

In actuality, as we shall see with greater clarity later, Hume wanted to make way for the investigation of the importance of the passions and other less certain, more intuitive types of thinking. That is why he is seen as pushing the Lockian theory of ideas to its ultimately futile conclusion; not because he delighted in antinomianism. Quite the contrary, he sought to establish a new direction in philosophy which would "reduce the chaos through a reconstruction of the underlying philosophy" to use Leslie Stephen's words. But in order to accomplish that reconstruction he first had to demonstrate the fallaciousness of certainty founded on purely phenomenological grounds. No doubt Hume confessed his debt to Locke and Berkeley many times; however his indebtedness seems to have more to do with their ability to show which ground had already been sown and proved infertile, than it does to Hume's intentions to plant in the same soil.

But if this new version of the relation between Hume and Locke-Berkeley is correct, how can one account for the number of philosophers who have subscribed to this oversimplification? An easy answer to such a question is not forthcoming. However, it is possible to see how Hume's comments about Locke in particular could be misinterpreted. Take for example, Hume's discussion of the science of human nature, an apparently Lockian enquiry. Hume opens the Inquiry with a discussion of two different approaches to this study. One, "which considers man chiefly as born for action and as influenced in his measures by taste and sentiment" and a second which is more interested in man as "a reasonable rather than an active being, and endeavors to form his understanding more than cultivate his manners."[1]

In the passage which follows, Hume suggests that though the philosophy which pictures man as active may be more popular and therefore may be remembered longer, it is the latter type of philosophy, the type which concentrates upon forming man's understanding, with which the great philosophical names, Locke in particular, are associated.

> The fame of Cicero flourishes at present, but that of Aristotle is utterly decayed. La Bruyere passes the seas and still maintains his reputation, but the glory of Malebranche is confined to his own nation and to his own age. And Addison, perhaps, will be read with pleasure when Locke shall be entirely forgotten.[2]

Though such a fate be lamentable Hume really seems to say that the merits of such a rational approach to the study of man overshadow the acclaims of notoriety. He appears to speak affirmatively of Locke when he remarks about the "positive advantages which result from an accurate scrutiny into the powers and faculties of human nature."[1] Hume suggests that if we can go no further than such an "accurate scrutiny" there is at least some satisfaction in going this far in that "the more obvious this science may appear, the more contemptible still must the ignorance of it be esteemed in all pretenders to learning and philosophy."[2]

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[1] Inq., p. 15.

[2] Ibid.

In all of these remarks Hume would appear to be speaking favorably of Locke's approach to the science of human nature. However, particularly in this last passage a certain irony[3] becomes clearer. Hume seeks to divorce himself completely from such a rational view of human reason as Locke has put forward. In fact his aim is to overturn such a method altogether. This is evident at first when, after mentioning the "positive results" to be obtained from the apparently Lockian study of human reason, instead of affirming his support of Locke he mentions in a footnote two figures whom he regards as having been "overlooked," Frances Hutcheson, and Bishop Joseph Butler.[4] Apparently Hume's professed admiration for Locke is more ironic and adulatory. For when Hume finally states his own understanding of his attitude toward the study of human nature, the contrast with Locke is a marked one. He suggests that "philosophy, if cultivated with care and encouraged by the attention of the public" may even be capable of going beyond the limited goals proposed by Locke and others so that discoveries not unlike those which had been put forward by Newton in the field of astronomy may also be possible in the science of human nature.[1] Certainly Hume was not speaking of an abstract and esoteric philosophy here. Instead he appears to be calling for a radical transcending of Locke and other exponents of this "abstruse" philosophy.

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[1] Inq., p. 17. (In a note Hume mentions that though Locke be forgotten he did not intend by his remarks "to detract from the merit of Mr. Locke, who was really a great philosopher.")

[2] Ibid., p. 22

[3] See J. V. Price, The Ironic Hume, Austin: University of Texas, 1965. Price argues that Hume made use of just this type of irony in deliberate fashion as a means of both confusing his critics and increasing the impact of his attack upon his predecessors.

[4] Inq., p. 23.

> Happy if we can unite the boundaries of the different species of philosophy by reconciling profound inquiry with clearness, and truth with novelty. And still more happy, if, reasoning in this easy manner, we can undermine the foundations of an abstruse philosophy which seems to have hitherto served only as a superstition and a cover to absurdity and error.[2]

Quite evidently Hume sought to steer a course between the Lockian "abstruse and accurate scrutiny" of the human understanding and the less weighty, more popular study of man presented by Cicero and others. His intention was to develop a philosophy of human nature which was both "encouraged by the attention of the public" and "cultivated with care."[1]

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[1] Inq., p. 24.

[2] Inq., p. 25.

In short, Hume had set himself an intellectual task which he apparently regarded as in some sense unprecedented. This is what Kemp Smith is referring to when he remarks that there is "much in the Treatise not to be found anywhere in Locke or Berkeley."[2] That is not to say that Locke and Berkeley were unimportant to Hume. They provide the starting place from which Hume takes his departure in his attempt to draft a "new conception of knowledge," as Kemp Smith puts it. Such a new conception required Hume to go beyond the narrow phenomenological limits established by Locke and Berkeley to enquire into the secrets of the human intellect. Thus one can quite legitimately conclude that one of the consequences of Humian philosophy is the demonstration of the ultimate futility of the Lockian theory of ideas. But it is a mistake to assume that this is the most profound contribution of Hume. For it only signals the beginning of his philosophical program. The more profound contribution is to be seen in his attempt to do for the study of human nature what Newton in particular had done for the study of the physical world: To draft a new conception of the "statics and dynamics" of the human mind, to borrow a term for Newton.

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[1] Hence the importance of Hume's injunction, "Be a philosopher but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man." (Inq., p. 18) It might also be conjectured that this was yet another reason for Hume's profound disappointment at the public reception accorded the first editions of the Treatise.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, "The Naturalism of David Hume", p. 155.

Such a task could only be undertaken with some temerity on Hume's part, for knowledge about such a subject was still encumbered with mystery and superstition. Thus it is not surprising to read of Hume's melancholy and frustration as he recognized the complexity of the task before him. In retrospect one might be tempted to regard such intellectual daring as foolhardy. Perhaps Beattie's reaction to Hume seems more understandable when viewed in that light. But as we have indicated the eighteenth-century mind was prevented by its own limited insight from recognizing the enormity of the task which lay before it. Furthermore, the advances of Newtonian science inspired a confidence in man's rational ability which must have encouraged Hume when his spirits were flagging. In addition, other moral philosophers, Francis Hutcheson in particular, had already begun to work out a sketch of human nature which promised a fundamentally different picture of man; one that Hume no doubt felt permitted a more workable model for his attempt to parallel Newton than did the views of Locke and Berkeley. Hence if we are truly to understand Hume's relation to his own intellectual milieu we must examine his interest in Hutcheson, Newton, and these other figures as well.

5. An Alternate View of Hume's Philosophical Antecedents

If it can be granted that Hume's primary intellectual forbears were not Locke and Berkeley, who were the philosophical figures whom he regarded as models? It should be clear from what we have already suggested about Hume that he followed no single school of thought slavishly, which fact should make the Locke-Berkeley theory all the more untenable. However there were some figures who seem to have played a more dominant role in shaping his thinking than others. As has been argued by Norman Kemp Smith the determining influence in human life, as Hume sought to understand it, was feeling, not reason. Therefore Hume was not concerned so much about evidence, or even about ideas in the Lockian sense. The passions become his fascination. Thus when Kemp Smith suggests those figures who must be regarded as having the greatest appeal for Hume, it is no surprise that for the most part, they are all figures who have some concern for the sensible rather than the rational side of man.

The figures whom Kemp Smith, Passmore, E. C. Mossner and others who subscribe to this new interpretation of Hume regard as having the most profound impact upon Hume are Francis Hutcheson, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Joseph Butler, Lord Shaftesbury, and Pierre Bayle. With the exception of Newton, all of these figures developed doctrines which emphasized the emotional nature of man. Thus it should be clear why Kemp Smith and the others regard these figures as important to Hume. But what sort of evidence, apart from Kemp Smith's contention that Hume himself was more interested in the passionate nature of man, exists to support this view?

In the introduction to the *Treatise*, Hume makes reference to "some late philosophers in England who have begun to put the science of man on a new footing."[1] In the note which follows he names Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Butler, along with Locke and a Dr. Mandeville whom he regards as influential in initiating this new direction. There are several oblique references which speak of Hume's admiration for Newton. Perhaps one of the more dramatic ones is the mention of Newton referred to above in the *Inquiry* as the model for Hume's investigation of "mental powers." There is only one cryptic reference to Bayle in the *Treatise* as the source for Hume's views of the contradictory character of Spinoza.[2]

Fortunately it is not necessary to rest our case solely upon Hume's own reference to these figures.. If this were the requirement very little could be maintained about Hume's predecessors because of the great scarcity of references of any type. Ample evidence does exist for

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[1] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888, p. xxi. (Hereafter abbreviated Tr.)

[2] Tr., p. 243.

Kemp Smith's interpretation from an examination of the congruity between the views of the figures mentioned and those of Hume.

a. The philosophy of Francis Hutcheson

Francis Hutcheson is the individual whom Kemp Smith regards as the most significant figure for Hume. How important finally he is to Hume is something which we will attempt to demonstrate at the conclusion of this chapter. However, from a brief survey of Hutcheson's and Hume's views the congruity between their two positions is apparent. Hutcheson, according to Kemp Smith, was regarded as an innovator in Scottish philosophy.[1] Appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow in 1729, the year in which Hume began to suffer his philosophical discomforts, he soon introduced a number of changes in the study of philosophy. He abandoned the use of Latin texts, relying instead upon his own lectures or translations of the classics. But perhaps more important was his abandonment of the classical thesis that morality is fundamentally a rational matter.

However, in order to understand that point of view it is necessary to look at the synthesis which Hutcheson created from the views of his own mentors. Lord Shaftesbury and John Locke. Shaftesbury can be recognized as the ancestor of a more optimistic understanding of human nature in that he felt compelled to defend it from both the pessimistic Christian orthodoxy of his day as well as Hobbes' misanthropy. In contrast, Shaftesbury developed an ecstatic appreciation for the beauty and orderliness of nature, both human and animal.

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 23f.

> O Glorious nature! Supremely Fair and sovereignly Good! All-loving and All-lovely, All-divine... To thee this Solitude, this place, these Rural Meditations are sacred; whilst thus inspir'd with Harmony of Thought, tho unconfin'd by words, and loose Numbers. I sing of Nature's Order in created Beings, and celebrate the Beautys which resolve in Thee, the Source and Principle of all Beauty and Perfection.[1]

Thus, it is no surprise that Shaftesbury should regard morality as essentially the task of following nature.[2] The righteous man, for Shaftesbury, is the natural man who follows the guidance of common sense, good humor, and free thinking. It is hardly surprising that Shaftesbury is reported to have had some genuine doubts about the ability of orthodox Christianity to produce such natural morality.[3]

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[1] Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury's Works (1727 ed.), cited by Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 62f.

[2] Ibid., p. 70f.

[3] The similarity between Shaftesbury's views and those which Hume develops in the Dialogues is intriguing. Leslie Stephens quotes Shaftesbury in this regard. "The Church, in short, is excellent as a national refrigerating machine; but no cultivated person could believe in its doctrines." Leslie Stephen, op. cit., p. 19. Willey maintains that Shaftesbury opposed orthodox Christianity because it required basing faith not on the best and truest, but upon belief in miracles, Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 66.

As an orthodox theist Hutcheson apparently paid little heed to these latter remarks of Shaftesbury. He did respond positively to Shaftesbury's optimistic enthusiasm about the harmony of nature. One can still see Shaftesbury's Panglossian attitude in Hutcheson's development of the notion of the moral sense, which will be discussed in detail momentarily.

Another source for Hutcheson's doctrine of the moral sense was John Locke. However it is not the traditional Lockian doctrine of ideas which Hutcheson adopts. Instead Hutcheson sees fit to modify Locke's distinction between inner and outer sense. Locke according to Hutcheson failed to understand the real parallel which is present between the inner and outer senses when he called the former "reflection" and regarded them as merely the mind's capacity for reflecting upon its own states. Hutcheson acknowledges, says Kemp Smith,[1] that inner senses produce secondary impressions in that they are dependent upon the antecedent apprehension of impressions of the outer senses. However, these secondary impressions of reflection are not regarded as inferior to the impressions of the outer senses. They are equally underivative. Thus Hutcheson could maintain that the moral sense bears a direct analogy to the physical senses.

Just as the sensation of sweetness seems to be a characteristic of our human nature which requires that under certain physiological conditions we will consider certain objects sweet, so it is with regard to judgements concerning aesthetics and morality. By the same necessity we are impelled to consider certain objects pleasing or approved.

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 25.

Furthermore, Hutcheson insists that such necessity is not the product of our own subjective volition. Regardless of our inclinations we seem to regard certain actions as aesthetically pleasing or morally righteous according to the natural operations of human nature.

> Dissimulation may be procur'd by Rewards or Threatenings, or we may in external Conduct abstain from any pursuit of the Beautiful, and pursue the Deform'd; but our Sentiments of the Forms, and our Perceptions, would continue invariably the same....
> Assure us that it will be advantageous to us, propose even a Reward; our Sense of the Action is not alter'd. It is true these Motives may make us undertake it; but they have no more influence upon us to make us approve it, than a Physicians Advice has to make a nauseous Potion pleasant to the Taste, when we perhaps force ourselves to take it for the Recovery of Health.[1]

This, then, is Hutcheson's doctrine of the moral sense. It is really a synthetic combination of Locke's doctrine of the inner senses modified by Hutcheson's own high estimate of Shaftesbury's notion of the natural harmony of the universe.

Such a system has some familiar implications about it in that, says Leslie Stephen, it really must be regarded as the predecessor of Mill's and Bentham's Utilitarianism. For Hutcheson the moral sense seems always to coincide in its determinations with actions which contribute to the public good.

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[1] F. Hutcheson, Essay on the Passions and Affections, p. 12, cited in N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 27.

> In the same manner the moral evil or vice (of a given action) is as the degree of misery and number of sufferers; so that that action is best which procures the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers.[1]

However, the fact that the moral sense always seems to approve those actions which have utilitarian consequences should not lead one to assume that its operations are thereby rational in some sense. Kemp Smith makes clear that the foundation of such moral sense is not reason but feeling. "Sensory judgements concern _de facto_ experience of this and that sensation; aesthetic and moral judgements concern _de facto_ experience of this and that sentiment."[2] Leslie Stephen corroborates Kemp Smith's interpretation when he remarks that Hutcheson's view is that the moral sense perceives virtue and vice as the eye perceives light. It doesn't frame moral propositions any more readily than our visual senses frame geometrical axioms.[3]

This then was the happy synthesis which Hutcheson created and which Hume found so appealing. Perhaps it might be regarded as a model for Hume's own constructive impulses in that it contains the thrust of the Lockian empirical movement without the much discussed sceptical consequences of that turn of thought. Two safety checks in Hutcheson's philosophy prevent him from the dangers of scepticism. The first, obviously, is the Shaftesburian faith in the orderliness of nature. For Shaftesbury and hence for Hutcheson too, nature must be regarded as supremely reliable. Regardless of the limitations of human reason, and perhaps also because of them, nature's certain order will prevail in the end. Therefore, one need have few qualms about man's ability to understand the workings of nature. One ought only to trust its supreme wisdom. The second check which prevented Hutcheson from tumbling over the sceptical escarpment was his own firm commitment to naturalistic theism. According to Hume's biographer, E. C. Mossner, Hutcheson was one of the champions of liberal, natural theology during the conflict which was raging in the Church of Scotland at the time. His System of Moral Philosophy was praised by the journal which represented the liberal party in the struggle.[1] Hume himself acknowledged the influence of Butler's naturalistic theism upon Hutcheson in a letter written in response to Hutcheson's recently published Moral Philosophy. "You seem here to embrace Dr. Butler's Opinion in his Sermons on human Nature; that our moral Sense has an Authority distinct from its Force and Durableness, and that because we always think it ought to prevail."[1] Apparently Hume felt that Hutcheson's reliance upon Butler's theology was a dependency uncritically embraced by Hutcheson which, in Hume's estimate, rendered Hutcheson's views on the moral sense inconsistent with his theism.

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[1] F. Hutcheson, _Ibid._, cited in Leslie Stephen, _op. cit._, Vol. II, p. 61. Stephen indicates that Hutcheson is the first to use the motto of the later Utilitarians.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, _The Philosophy of David Hume_, p. 30.

[3] L. Stephen, _op. cit._, Vol. II, p. 59.

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[1] E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 339.

But theism played an important role in Hutcheson's philosophy for it provided the necessary metaphysical support for his Shaftesburian optimism. Without it his view would have become little more than a fanatical enthusiasm about the joys of nature. His theism however allowed him to perceive a grand design in the universe which promised the guidance of a Divine Craftsman. As Leslie Stephen puts it: "Human nature is in his opinion, a machine of innumerable parts skillfully put together for benign purposes by the Divine artisan."[2] To illustrate the dramatic importance which Hutcheson placed upon belief in God; it caused him finally to turn against Hume when he was being considered for the chair of Moral Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, in spite of the cordial relationship which existed between the two men. Although no reasons are given, no doubt Hutcheson felt that Hume's version of the moral sense philosophy, a moral sense minus its theistic supports, might prove disastrous for undergraduates. Thus it seems clear that Hutcheson's theism plays a crucial role in his philosophy. It allowed him to take moral positions which some regarded as radical since he still maintained his essentially orthodox theistic foundations.

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[1] E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 339.

[2] Ibid., p. 148.

In spite of this important difference of opinion between them the debt which Hume owes Hutcheson for his conclusion that "reason is and ought only to be the slave of the passions"[1] seems clear. And such indebtedness extends not only to Hume's espousal of Hutcheson's own views regarding the moral sense, but it is to Hutcheson that Hume is indebted for his introduction to the views of Locke and Shaftesbury. Kemp Smith remarks, "it is through the eyes of Hutcheson that Hume reads both Shaftesbury and Locke."[2] Thus Hutcheson not only conveys the thrust of the Lockian empiricism to Hume but he does so in modified and synthesized form, in a manner which perhaps served as a model for the modifying and synthesizing which Hume was to perform upon Hutcheson's own views at a later date.

The close relationship between Hutbheson and Hume has already been indicated, but what proof can be mustered to demonstrate such influence? Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of Hume's interest in Hutcheson can be gained from Hume's own words.

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[1] Tr., p. 415.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 24.

> But a late philosopher (Francis Hutcheson) has taught us, by the most convincing arguments, that morality is nothing in the abstract nature of things but is entirely relative to the sentiment or mental taste of each particular being, in the same manner as the distinctions of sweet and bitter, hot and cold arise from the particular feeling of each sense or organ. Moral perceptions, therefore, ought not to be classed with the operations of the understanding but with the tastes or sentiments.[1]

Such praise is truly remarkable when one recognizes how tight-lipped Hume was about his intellectual antecedents. In addition there is also this remark from Hume's correspondence with Hutcheson which not only demonstrates the close identity between their views regarding the moral sense, but also hints at how Hume handled the difference between them regarding belief in the "Divine Artisan."

> I must consult you in a Point of prudence. I have concluded a reasoning with these two sentences. "When you pronounce any Action or Character to be vicious, you mean nothing but that from the particular Constitution of your Nature you have a Feeling of Sentiment of Blame from the Contemplation of it. Vice and Virtue, therefore may be compar'd to Sounds. Colours, Heat and Cold, which according to modern Philosophy, are not Qualitys in Objects but Perceptions in the Mind: And this Discovery in Morals, like that other in Physicks, is to be regarded as a mighty Advancement of the speculative Sciences; tho' like that too, it has little or no influence on Practice." Is this not laid a little to strong? I desire your Opinion of it, tho' I cannot entirely promise to conform myself to it. *I wish from my Heart, I could avoid concluding, that since Morality, according to your Opinion as well as mine, is determin'd merely by Sentiment, it regards only human Nature and human Life.*[2]

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[1] Inq., p. 23.

[2] D. Hume, *Letters*, ed. Grieg, pp. 39-40, cited in N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 20. (Italics mine)

This last sentence provides a clue to Hume's divergence from Hutcheson. Certainly Hume was conscious of the sceptical consequences which must follow an empirical investigation of the foundations of morality. Perhaps that is why he speaks of his "heartfelt" desire to avoid concluding that morality is founded solely upon "Sentiment." Nevertheless, Hume clearly regards human nature as a suitable and indeed the only tenable guarantee of morality. Certainly it is this reliance upon human nature which Hume chose to replace Hutcheson's theism. Hutcheson was no doubt fully aware of this as he must have been aware of Hume's ironic jibe, "since Morality according to your Opinion as well as mine, is determin'd merely by Sentiment." This jibe indicates Hume's incredulousness that Hutcheson should thus attempt to join an empirical moral philosophy with a naturalistic metaphysics, two endeavors which he understood at least in their present states as difficult to reconcile.[1] Thus it is that Hume replaces reliance upon the "Divine Artisan" with trust in human nature. But how is Hume to avoid the charge that such a substitution succeeds only in the development of a reckless naturalistic enthusiasm? That question can be answered only upon considering certain of the other components in the synthesis which made up Hume's "new scene of thought."

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[1] In response to Hutcheson's charge that Hume's third volume of the Treatise, "of morals," lacked a certain warmth Hume replied, "...I am perswaded, that a Metaphysician may be very helpful to a Moralist; tho' I cannot easily conceive these two Characters united in the same Work. Any warm Sentiment of Morals, I am afraid, would have the Air of Declamation amidst abstract Reasonings, and wou'd be esteem'd contrary to good Taste. And tho' I am much more ambitious of being esteem'd a Friend to Virtue, than a Writer of Taste; yet I must always carry the latter in my Eye, otherwise I must despair of ever being serviceable to Virtue. I hope these Reasons will satisfy you; tho at the same time, I intend to make a new Tryal, if it be possible to make the Moralist & Metaphysician agree a little better." (See E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 134). Hume's doubts about combining metaphysics and morals are clear but there

b. The philosophy of Joseph Butler

Another figure whom Hume mentions in that same note[1] with Hutcheson is Bishop Joseph Butler. Unfortunately opinions of his views are much less unanimous than they are of Hutcheson's. Leslie Stephen regards Butler with ridicule and suggests that his dismemberment of the power and authority of reason succeeds only in severely hobbling his own philosophical efforts.[2] In particular Stephen maintains that Butler's Analogy of Religion must be regarded as a failure since he failed to comprehend the use which might be put to his assertions by individuals who did not share his belief in theism. For when God becomes equivalent to nature, says Stephen, then one of the inescapable consequences of Butler's Analogy must be an

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is also a hint here of Hume's hunch that another combination of these two enterprises was possible if they could be seriously reformulated.

[1] See above p. 28, note #1.

[2] Leslie Stephen, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 308.

argument for atheism. "God made men liable to sin he damns them everlastingly for sinning."[1]

In contrast, the more recent views of Basil Willey exhibit a much more complimentary attitude toward Butler.[2] His interpretation indicates how Hume might have been prompted by Butler to modify his Shaftesburian optimism about nature along more realistic lines. Willey suggests that Butler's Analogy is a unique work because it stands in marked contrast to the optimistic naivete about nature which was so prevalent in the eighteenth century. Says Willey, "after two hundred years it is still one of the more impressive works of the period."[3] In particular Willey feels that there is a certain realism and depth of vision in both Butler's religion and his morality. Willey contends that Butler was correct when he criticized Deism for its facile identification of God with nature, its inclination for making man the measure of all things, and its disregard for those elements of experience which involve paradox, irrationality, transcendence. This combination of attitudes produces a pseudo-faith which, says Willey, justly falls under the condemnation of Coleridge's dictum: "It could not be intellectually more evident without being morally less effective."[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 282f.

[2] An interesting sidelight of this difference of opinion between Willey and Stephen on Butler can be seen in their differing attitudes toward the role of reason. Stephen, consonant with the nineteenth century's continuing regard for reason, exhibits the repugnance he feels toward antirational views. Willey is chary about the ability of reason to sustain such confidence and thus is more ready to applaud a circumscribed view of reason. Although Willey doesn't make his views explicit, it might be possible to trace Stephen's sceptical interpretation of Hume to similar causes. In his mind both Butler and Hume are regarded as pursuing anti-rational views which could produce only negative results.

[3] Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 78.

In response to such pseudo-religion, Butler developed a moral philosophy which, while maintaining certain affinities for the faith in nature articulated by Shaftesbury, evidences a much more complex attitude toward such a faith. Butler insists, according to Willey,[2] that the nature of man is far more complex than Shaftesbury had recognized it to be. In contrast to the latter's exultation in common sense and good humor, Butler argues that there are certain parts of human nature, in his view the principle of reflection or conscience, which have a natural prerogative to rule the whole system. Therefore to live according to human nature for Butler means that one recognize the existence of this inner check which acts upon us as a law of human nature with nearly categorical force. However, apart from that nod to rationalism, Butler contends that it is impossible to specify in advance just how such a law of conscience will operate. In this regard he evidences his disagreement with Hutcheson's nascent utilitarianism for he insists that human nature does not have sufficient clairvoyance to enable us to be certain of the consequences of our actions.

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[1] W. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria, cited by Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 83.

[2] Basil Willey, op. cit., p. 86f.

E. C. Mossner contends that Butler's Analogy of Religion was "the one theological work of the century that Hume was to deem worthy of serious consideration."[1] Apparently it was his high regard for Butler which prompted Hume to delete his devastating section on miracles before showing the first draft of the Treatise to him.[2] But there is more explicit evidence of Butler's influence upon Hume. In the note referred to above in the Inquiry in which Hume mentions Hutcheson, he also makes reference to a false distinction between selfish and benevolent passions. He names Butler as the philosopher who correctly perceived the futility of such a distinction.

> It has been proved, beyond all controversy, that even the passions commonly esteemed selfish carry the mind beyond self directly to the object; that though the satisfaction of these passions gives us enjoyment, and without the former the latter could never possibly exist; the case is precisely the same with the passions denominated benevolent, and consequently that a man is no more interested when he seeks his own glory than when the happiness of his friend is the object of his wishes; nor is he any more disinterested when he sacrifices his ease and quiet to public good than when he labors for the gratification of avarice or ambition. Here, therefore, is a considerable adjustment in the

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[1] Op. cit., p. 110.

[2] Ibid. (Hume wrote his cousin "I am at present castrating my Work, that is cutting off its noble Parts, that is, endeavouring it shall give as little Offence as possible...")

> boundaries of the passions, which had been confounded by the negligence of inaccuracy of former philosophers.[3]

Furthermore, such an understanding of the passions indicates Hume's agreement with Butler's more limited notion of the agreement of the moral sense with more rationally discernible consequences such as the public good.

No doubt the element which Hume found most attractive about Butler was his realism, his refusal to be taken in by the romanticism and naturalistic fanaticism of the day. Butler also showed how unpredictable the empirical method could become when he turned the attack of the Deists upon Orthodox Christianity back upon themselves.[1] Hume was already aware, as a result of his own philosophical suffering, of what a frail reed empirical knowledge proved to be when one attempted to lean too heavily upon it. It is also undoubtedly true that Hume took some comfort from Butler's insistence upon the certain operation of the principle of conscience. Such a point of view must have served to confirm Hume's confidence in human nature.

But as we noted in our discussion of Hume's admiration for Hutcheson, Hume was required, with regard to Butler as well, to find some other source of support for such confidence as an alternative to Butler's theism. Further investigation will reveal the formidable origin of that alternative support.

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[1] E. C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 110.

c. The philosophy of Pierre Bayle

Yet another figure who seems to have accelerated Hume's movement toward the development of the importance of the role of the passions over reason was the Frenchman, Pierre Bayle. As was the case with the other ancestors of Hume's views, Bayle was a theist who sought to limit the role of reason for the sake of faith.[1] Although he was regarded as a descendent of Gassendi, one of Descartes' first opponents, Bayle really was more interested in the conflict raging between Calvinists and Catholics in seventeenth-century France. As a staunch Protestant he entered the fray against Cartesian rationalism by insisting, with what we might now regard as a Kierkegaardian intention that "the best faith is that which is built upon the ruins of reason."[2]

As was the case with both Butler and Hutcheson, Hume seems to have been interested in Bayle primarily because of his attack upon dogmatism. His conclusions are similar to

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[1] It was on this basis that Shaftesbury found Bayle appealing. He is reputed to have argued that "Bayle was one of the most perfect Christians he had ever met." (See R. H. Popkin, "Skeptical Precursors of D. Hume," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Vol. 16, 1955-56, p. 67f.)

[2] Pierre Bayle, cited by R. H. Popkin, "The High Road to Pyrrhonism," American Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. II, 1965, p. 28f. (Popkin also argues that Bayle regarded Cicero's De Natura Naturorum as a model for his own program. A. G. N. Flew contends that Hume also followed Cicero as a model for his Dialogues. See A. G. N. Flew, op. cit., p. 217.

Bayle's in that he agrees that there is no ground for any belief whether it be factual or moral. "All Reasonings are caused by natural processes and have no grounds, only explanations. And to make matters worse, the naturally caused reasonings conflict."[1] Apparently Hume's concerns were similar enough to those of Bayle that when Hume visited Bayle's biographer he is reported to have remarked that Hume's writings were "worthy of the pen of Bayle."[2]

Unfortunately too many philosophers have made this rather superficial connection between Hume and Pyrrhonism. As Popkin correctly recognizes, Hume's scepticism must be sharply distinguished from that espoused by Bayle.

> ...the scepticism of Hume was quite different. Bayle was only able to destroy, but never to construct. Hume had a new edifice to build-- the moral sciences on top of Bayle's Pyrrhonism. *Blind faith could be ignored, to be replaced by a new science, the psychology of Francis Hutcheson*.[3]

Popkin's articles about Hume and Bayle are full of cryptic remarks like this one. Perhaps if he had discussed all that is entailed in Hume's replacement of "blind faith" with Hutcheson's "psychology" this present study would be a considerably simpler task. But as we have seen, Hume could not borrow Hutcheson's psychology without somehow taking into account the metaphysical framework which s supported that "psychology" any more than he could follow Bayle's Pyrrhonistic path without preparing himself against its ultimately negative outcome. Hume seems to avoid both those dilemmas, but in order to understand how he does so we must explore the relationship between Hume and the empirical science of Sir Isaac Newton.

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[1] R. H. Popkin, "D. Hume and Pyrrhonism," *Revue of Metaphysics*, Vol. vi., 1952, p. 76f.

[2] R. H. Popkin, "Skeptical Predursors," p. 69. (Italics mine)

[3] *Ibid.*

d. The philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton

The figures who have been discussed heretofore have shared a common concern for a reassessment of the respective roles of reason and the emotions. All of them have indicated, albeit with differing emphasis, their conclusions that man's passionate nature is more fundamental in guiding man's behavior than his rational nature. But there is a difficulty evident in Hume's interest in these figures' re-evaluation of the roles of reason and the passions. All of them begin this reassessment with a firm conviction of the providence of God. If reason is tried and found wanting by them it is only because their theism permits this excursus in anti-rationalism. But Hume shared few of these theistic presuppositions. How then could he have found these figures' views of the importance of the passions appealing if he failed to share their fundamental theistic assumptions? The thrust of this question reveals the fundamental significance of Newton in Humian philosophy. It seems clear that Hume's understanding of the reliability of natural law, which is the culmination of Newtonian science, is the metaphysical support which Hume uses to replace the theistic presuppositions of Hutcheson, et. al.

However as we have indicated, the peculiar deficiency of the eighteenth century mind frequently resulted in an overconfident estimate of the abilities of reason. Hume's confidence in Newton is a good case in point. For while it allowed him the freedom to mark out an unprecedented movement in the study of human nature, it also embroiled him in philosophical inconsistencies which eventually led him to be misinterpreted. This formative element in Newton which Hume found so attractive is his development of the experimental method, as well as his failure to recognize the full import of the advocacy of such a method. In short there is a profound ambiguity in Newton's, and especially the Newtonian's, insistence upon the experimental mehtod; an ambiguity which as we shall see throughout this essay has formative consequences for Hume's philosophy.

This ambiguity appears in Newton's description of the contrast between his new experimental method and the older classicalmmethod of enquiry. This passage from the Opticks is one example of it.

> These Principles (such as Inertia, Gravity, Cohesion of Bodies) I consider, not as occult Qualities, supposed to result from the specifick Forms of Things, but as general Laws of Nature, by which the Things themselves are form'd; their Truth appearing to us by Phaenomena, though their Causes be not yet discover'd. For these are manifest Qualities, their Causes only are occult. And the

> Aristotelians gave the Name of occult Qualities not to manifest Qualities, but to such Qualities only as they supposed to lie hid in Bodies, and to be the unknown Causes of manifest Effects; Such as would be the Causes of Gravity, and of magnetick and electrick Attractions, and of Fermentations, if we should suppose that these Forces or Actions arose from Qualities unknown to us, and uncapable of being discovered and made manifest. Such occult Qualities put a stop to the Improvement of Natural Philosophy, and therefore of late Years have been rejected. To tell us that every Species of Things is endowed with an occult specifick Quality by which it acts and produces manifest Effects, is to tell us nothing: *But to derive two or three general Principles of Motion from Phaenomena* and afterwards to tell us how the Properties and Actions of all corporeal Things follow from those manifest Principles, *would be a very great step in Philosophy, though the Causes of those Principles were not yet discover'd:* *And therefore I scruple not to propose the Principles of Motion above-mentioned, they being of very general Extent, and leave their Causes to be found out*.[1]

In this paragraph Newton contrasts his pursuit of the general laws of nature with the classical pursuit of the mechanical causes of things. His pursuit of this empirical method was not new. Galileo, Pascal, Huygens, and numerous other scientists already had expressed similar views. But it remained for Newton to demonstrate in brilliant fashion the far-reaching implications of such a new empiricism. As he indicates, in rather understated fashion in the passage quoted, the discovery of general laws obviates the necessity of enquiring into causes. Thus the old metaphysics of substance and form, the explanation of phenomena in terms of their generating causes is bypassed. A new era is revealed which will allow the discovery and explanation of phenomena previously closed to study by this heady reliance upon Aristotelian metaphysics.

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[1] Sir Isaac Newton, *Opticks*, cited in N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 55f. (Italics mine)

And thereby hangs another tale and the source of the difficulty which was to ensnare Newton's followers. For as we indicated above the eighteenth century mine was frequently so dazzled by its own discoveries that it often mistook, or failed to understand completely, the implications of those same discoveries. This fact is evident in this passage from Newton as well. For while Newton's intent is to contrast the empirical method with the old philosophy of mechanism, there are phrases present in this very paragraph which have a mechanistic ring about them and which were to prove dangerously misleading, if not for Newton at least for his followers. Take for example his comments about the discovery of the causes of these "general laws of nature." Apparently his intention was to point out the significance of the laws which overshadowed the discovery of the causes behind them. But he stops short of saying that the pursuit of causes is no longer required. In one sentence he says: "Though the Causes of those Principles were not yet discover'd." In another he suggests; "and leave their Causes to be found out." Both comments imply that while the discovery of general laws is certainly the more important pursuit, the discovery of causes is also a task which is still possible and perhaps worthy of consideration.

Perhaps this ambiguity in Newton can be regarded as a carry-over from his earlier fascination with astrology.[1] In that light is is remarkable that he was capable of maintaining the consistency in the application of the experimental method toward the discovery of natural laws, that he did. For example he was unsparing in his criticism of scientists who gave greater priority to hypotheses than to experiments. For he felt that such reliance upon hypotheses was a throwback to the old philosophy of mechanism from which science had taken so long to separate itself.

> Hitherto I have not been able to discover the cause of those properties of gravity from phenomena, and I frame no hypotheses, hypotheses non fingo; for whatever is not deduced from the phenomena is to be called an hypothesis; and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, whether of occult qualities or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy.[2]

Hume himself saw Newton as a clear opponent of the philosophy of mechanism who was fully cognizant of the limitations of the new method which he proposed to replace it.

> While Newton seemed to draw off the veil from some of the mysteries of nature, he shewed at the same time the imperfections of the mechanical philosophy and thereby restored her ultimate secrets to that obscurity in which they ever did ever will remain.[3]

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[1] Newton enrolled at Cambridge to study the application of mathematics to astrology. (See G. Holton, Introduction to Concepts and Theories in Physical Science, Cambridge: Addison-Wesley Co., 1953, p. 171.

[2] I. Newton, Opticks, cited in N. Kemp Smith, Philosophy of D. Hume, p. 58. (Apparently Newton was astounded at the inability of his fellow scientists Huygens and Hooke to distinguish between hypotheses and experimental laws.)

[3] D. Hume, History of England, cited in N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of D. Hume, p. 57.

But perhaps the most dramatic evidence of Newton's attempt to remain true to his pledge not to indulge in the search for occult causes is the argument which he sustained with the Cartesians as well as some of his own followers concerning the causes of gravity.[1] The Cartesians posited a universe filled with material corpuscles which acted upon one another and thus transmitted motions between bodies seemingly separated by considerable distance. This theory in spite of its shoddy empirical foundation sounded much more plausible than Newton's discussion of bodies acting upon each other at a distance without any apparent mediating forces. However in spite of its greater plausibility, Newton stood his ground insisting upon his laws because his experiments proved them and asserting that he was neither willing nor able to "adjudge natural causes" and that "To us it is enough that gravity does really exist, and act according to the laws which we have explained, and abundantly serves to account for all the motions of the celestial bodies and of our sea."[2] Thus if there is a certain ambiguity in Newton, it must be maintained that he made a valiant effort to avoid it.

However, in spite of his caution inconsistencies did creep into his thinking. For example in his description of method there is an implied inconsistency which leads to the perpetuation of a philosophy of mechanism. As J. H. Randall describes it, it was Newton's intention to arrive at fundamental principles from an observation of the facts then to deduce the mathematical consequences of such principles and finally to submit such mathematical formulations to further observation and experiment.[1] Newton sought to save himself from the dangers of the hypothetical constructions of the old philosophy of mechanism by this last step. However, as is evident in the passage quoted below the discovdery of fundamental principles and laws, and more important, the deduction of their mathematical consequences, and lead man astray.

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[1] See G. Holton, op. cit., p. 206f.

[2] Ibid.

> This Analysis consists in making Experiments and Observations, and in drawing general Conclusions from them by Induction, and admitting of no Objections against the Conclusions, but such as are taken from Experiments or other certain Truths...
> And although the arguing from Experiments and Observations by Inductions be no demonstration of general Conclusions; yet is the best way of arguing which the Nature of Things admits of, and may be looked upon as so much the stronger, by how much the Induction is more general... By this way of Analysis we may proceed from Compounds to Ingredients, and from Motions to the Forces producing them; and in general, from Effects to their Causes, and from particular Causes to more general ones, till the Argument and in the most general. *This is the Method of Analysis; and the Synthesis consists in assuming the Causes discover'd, and establish'd as Principles, and by them explaining the Phaenomena proceeding from them and proving the Explanations*.[2]

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[1] J. H. Randall, *The Making of the Modern Mind*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954, p. 263f.

[2] I. Newton, *Opticks*, cited in N. Kemp-Smith, *Philosophy of D. Hume*, p. 56. (Italics mine)

Certainly Newton sought to emphasize the "Method of Analysis," the discovery and verification of principles. However he does see fit to mention the "Method of Synthesis" as well, the explanation of phenomena. It is this latter method which causes the difficulty. Because, as later science was to demonstrate, the discovery of "general causes" frequently leads one to claim more than he ought to claim or to explain more than the empirical data really permit.

Unfortunately, in spite of his caution Newton himself fell prey to the temptations of the "Method of Synthesis," albeit such slips were not frequent in Newton.[1] Nevertheless he does declare his belief in absolute space and absolute time, entities which certainly defy empirical verification.[2] And in one passage in the Opticks, in explanation of such seemingly non-verifiable principles he could say: "God moves the bodies within his boundless uniform sensorium."[3] But it should be clear that regardless of these slips Newton himself was more intent upon the discovery and verification of principles than he was upon their ability to serve as explanations of causes heretofore regarded as beyond understanding.

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[1] Holton remarks that Newton's reluctance to introduce the Creator into his discussion of the causes of gravity is remarkable since in his later years he considered himself as much theologian as scientist. (See G. Holton, op. cit., p. 208.)

[2] Mary Shaw Kuypers, op. cit., p. 19f.

[3] G. Holton, op. cit., p. 208.

That task remained for his followers to perform. Thus, as was mentioned earlier,[1] the culmination of Newtonian science was the development of a new rationalism which had many of the same marks of immutability and absoluteness for which Newton had berated the old Aristotelian metaphysic. Specifically, Newton's followers proceeded to attempt to undertake the very investigation of the causes of gravity which their mentor had coddemned.[2] In particular one of his chief disciples, Colin MacLaurin, made explicit what had only been implicit in Newton himself.

> Natural science is subservient to purposes of a higher kind and is chiefly to be valued as it lays a sure foundation for Natural Religion, Moral Philosophy: by leading us, in a satisfactory manner, to the knowledge of the Author and Governor of the universe.[3]

Thus largely because of the efforts of his disciples, Newton came to be regarded as the architect of a new mechanistic universe which exults with a Shaftesburian zeal in the grand unification of nature, reason, and divine revelation.

> All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body Nature is, and God the soul..
> All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:

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[1] See above pp. 7f.

[2] See N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 59f.

[3] Colin MacLaurin, An Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discourses, cited in ibid.

And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.[1]

Certainly Hume cannot be considered a disciple of this version of Newton. The fact that he is so successful in the Dialogues in his attack upon natural theology's failure to ground its evanescent doctrines in experience is ample evidence of that. But even apart from the Dialogues, Hume's stringent application of the Lockian doctrine of ideas would have prevented him from sharing sentiments similar to those of MacLaurin or Pope. No, Hume sought to follow Newton's empiricism, his mebhod of "Analysis."

In Hume's eyes Newton was the enemy of that philosophy of mechanism first articulated by Boyle which "by discovering some of the secrets of nature, and allowing us to imagine the rest, is so agreeable to the natural vanity and curiosity of men."[2] In that regard Hume was unsparing in his praise of Newton's use of the method of "Analysis."[3] Newton was the paradigm whose attempt to discover and verify the laws which govern the "statics and dynamics" of the natural world becomes the model for Hume's own efforts. Both Kemp Smith[1] and Passmore[2] agree that Hume's treatment of the laws which govern the association of ideas is modeled after Newton's method of "Analysis."

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[1] Alexander Pope, "Essay on Man," p. 106, from Alexander Pope, Selected Works, ed. Louis Kronenberger, New York, Modern Library College Editions.

[2] D. Hume, History of England, cited in E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 75.

[3] See Ibid. ("In Newton this island may boast of having produced the greatest and rarest genius that ever rose for the ornament and instruction of the species. Cautious in admitting no principles but such as were founded on experiment; but resolute to adopt every such principle however new or unusual.")

However Kemp Smith insists that Hume's early optimism about such a parallel with Newton is abandoned after his completion of the *Treatise*. It may have been modified, and we will see in a moment how such a modification might have occured, but in my estimate, Hume's intention to follow Newton's method of "Analysis" remains constant throughout his work. Take for example this statement from the *Inquiry*, which, according to Kemp Smith, should postdate Hume's attempt to parallel Newton.

> The like has been performed with regard to other parts of nature. And there is no reason to despair of equal success in our inquiries concerning the mental powers and economy if prosecuted with equal capacity and caution. *It is probable that one operation and principle of the mind depends on another, which again may be resolved into one more general and universal*: And how far these researches may possibly be carried, it will be difficult for us, bebefore or even after a careful trial, exactly to determine...
> Moralists have hitherto been accustomed, when they considered the vast multitude and diversity of those actions that excite our approbation or dislike, to search for some common principle on which this variety of sentiments might depend. And though they have sometimes carried the matter too far, by their passion for some one general principle, it must, however, be confessed that *they are excusable in expecting to find some general principles into which all the vices and virtues were justly to be resolved*...

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[1] *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 71.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 108.

> What though these reasonings concerning human nature seem abstract and of difficult comprehension, this affords no presumption of their falsehood... And whatever pains these researches may cost us, we may think ourselves sufficiently rewarded, not only in point of profit but of pleasure, if, by that means, we can make any addition to our stock of knowledge in subjects of such unspeakable importance.[1]

The similarity between Hume's words and those of Newton are remarkable. Newton says, "By this analysis we may proceed ...from particular Causes to more general ones, till the Argument end in the most general." Hume's words are remarkably similar. "It is probable that one operation and principle of the mind depends on another, which again may be resolved into one more general and universal."

But, as might be expected, the incidence of this identity between Hume and Newton in their employment of the empirical method, the method of "Analysis," is also parallelled by the presence of the same ambiguity in Hume with regard to the method of "Synthesis." The temptations which this method held for Hume appear in this same passage from the Inquiry. Note that Hume excuses those moralists who "have sometimes carried the matter too far, by their passion for some one general principle." Was this not the very sin which Boyle and the other mechanical philosophers committed? We will see in succeeding chapters how Hume himself produces a type of mechanistic explanation in his attempt to explain the basis for the causal connection by his discussion of the mechanism of belief.

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[1] Inq., p. 24f. (Italics mine)

Is Hume, finally, then to be regarded as a mechanical philosopher? That might be a tempting line to take for it would, perhaps, explain the seeming coincidence of sceptical and constructive elements in Hume. But that temptation must be avoided. Hume was not a convert to the philosophy of mechanism, though he did share some common assumptions with that mode of thinking. Of course the fundamental one is the mechanical philosophy's reliance upon natural law. Both Hume and the mechanistic Newtonians were enthusiastic about the orderliness and reliability which the universe took on as a result of Newton's formulation of the natural laws. Although Hume avoids the ecstaticism of Pope's "Essay on Man," he does have similar, though somewhat more limited hopes, concerning his "New scene of thought." And like the philosophers of mechanism, his hopes are founded upon the newly discovered reliability of natural law.

However, though he shares this common assumption, Hume's use of that assumption demonstrates how he distinguishes himself from his mechanical compatriots. As was the case with his employment of the Lockian doctrine of ideas, Hume pushes the mechanical philosophy's reliance upon natural law to its logical conclusion. Hume separates himself from the mechanical philosophy's deist and theist conclusions. Instead he seems to suggest that if the laws of nature demonstrate nature's uniformity it is not necessary to posit either a Christian "Divine Artisan" or a Deist Grand Mechanic. The data demand neither of these hypotheses. Instead one must avoid making any conjectures of this sort and rest content with the uniformity of natural law alone.[1]

And it is this uniformity which Hume relies upon so heavily to supply the necessary metaphysical support for his use of Hutchesnn's psychology. Thus, the reliability of natural law takes the place in Hume's system which Divine providence had played for Hutcheson, Butler, and Bayle. And Hume is saved from the charge of inconsistency or superficial enthusiast. Hume can subscribe to Hutcheson's redefinition of the importance of the roles of passion and reason without being required to submit finally to his mentor's insistence upon surrender to the Divine passion.

This fact alone provides, perhaps, the most convincing evidence of Hume's departure from the philosophy of mechanism. While he shares a common reliance upon the uniformity nature has revealed through Newton's laws, the model of the universe which Hume finally projects is radically different from the picture of the universe as a

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[1] This is not to suggest that Hume considered himself an atheist. In fact he earned the reproach of his atheistic friends in Paris because he refused to share their views. An English friend is reported to have said of him: "So that poor Hume, who on your side of the water was thought to have too little religion, is here thought to have too much." (See E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 485.)

Grand Machine. This is the ultimate metaphysical implication of the anti-sceptical interpretation of Hume which has been formulated by Kemp Smith and others. In Kemp Smith's view the important influence of Hutcheson prevails in the end, thus Hume's philosophical scheme is finally psychological not rational.

> When the really distinctive features, whether in the complex ideas of relations, modes and substances or in the natural beliefs, are squarely faced... *it is Hutchesonian, not Newtonian concepts (i. e., biological not physical analogies) which prove to be the more fundamental in Hume's thinking*. The processes of the mind, as Hume recognizes, are adaptive, not mechanical in character, and in final outcome it is in the passions and affections, not in the operation of association that he finds the solution of his chief problems. *In this respect, though not in questions of method, the Newtonian influence is recessive, not a dominant factor in Hume's total philosophy*.[1]

E. C. Mossner also remarks in a similar vein that it is Hume's reinterpretation of Hutcheson which proves to be the truly unique contribution of his philosophy: "The extension of sentiment or feeling beyond ethics and aesthetics (to which it was limited by Hutcheson) to include the entire realm of belief covering all relations of matter fact."[2]

For both of these Humian scholars it is the adaptive side of man, "the biological not the physical analogies" which prove to be the dominant and truly unique contribution of Humian philosophy. This understanding of Hume places him at a considerable distance from the philosophers of mechanism whose final models are essentially rational and mechanical. One can comprehend that distance with greater clarity if he looks again at the synthesis which Hume has constructed.

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 76. (Italics mine) (This final reference to Hume's departure from Newton, not in matters of method, but only with regard to the final metaphysical implications of that method, clarifies the remark which Kemp Smith makes earlier about the disenchantment with Newton which Hume experiences following the *Treatise*. See above, p. 53)

[2] E. C. Mossner, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

6. Summary and Conclusion: Hume's Synthesis

This chapter began by taking note of J. A. Passmore's warning that too many discussions of Hume's philosophy have committed the sin of oversimplification in assigning Hume's view prematurely to one philosophical position or another. In spite of our tracing of a revised view of the Humian influences it has not been our intention to somehow "set the record straight" so that the real Hume could appear. As we suggested earlier the temper of the times prevents the assumption that any figure's view may be regarded as easily defined or simply self-consistent. Passmore himself demonstrates well the number of different categories which must be employed if one is tommake some attempt at comprehensive generalization about Hume's philosophy.

> Hume's positivism arises out of his attempt to develop a non-metaphysical, non-declamatory moral science; his phenomenalism serves to buttress the doctrine that the science of man is primarily and

> pre-eminently secure; his scepticism is intended as a rebuke to physicists and metaphysicians.[1]

But perhaps Passmore's most important words are those which immediately follow these. For they demonstrate the sense in which Hume must be regarded as transcending all of these categories and they also point to that particular element in Hume with which this particular study is uniquely concerned. Passmore says: "But he argues beyond his brief; his achievements and his intentions do not wholly coincide."[2] It is my contention that it is this lack of congruity between intentions and achievements which signals the unique thrust of Hume's "new scene." It is Hume's inchoate desire to form a new synthesis, stating the significance of the passions over reason, which causes him to argue beyond his brief.

However, this fact does not permit us to ignore Passmore's warning. To suggest that Hume sought to develop a new synthesis is not to argue that he was completely successful. He was still subject to the errors of his age, to the pretensions of the mechanistic Newtonians as well as the short-sightedness of the Pyrrhonians. Certainly some of the elements in his new synthesis are unwieldy, that in itself must be regarded as the greatest single reason for his continued misinterpretation. It would be a grievious error to neglect this fact about Humian interpretation, if for no other reason because its neglect would undoubtedly mean that we would overlook the unique combination of elements which are included in his new synthesis.

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[1] J. A. Passmore, op. cit., p. 15. [2] Ibid.

However, with this warning well in mind this study will concentrate its focus not upon the conflicts and inconsistencies in Hume's philosophy but upon the thrust of his "new scene." And in that regard we will pay particular attention to the continual recurrence in Hume of a critical and constructive mind which is most reminiscent of Francis Hutcheson. Hutcheson's critical acumen which allowed him to accept Shaftesbury's naturalism minus his anti-ecclesiastical views and to accept Locke's empiricism minus the final sceptical implications of that empiricism is parallelled by a similar critical skill in Hume. Hume would appear to be following Hutcheson's critical lead in his acceptance of Hutcheson's own moral sense philosophy, and in his acceptance of Butler's realism minus both of these figures' reliance upon orthodox theism. There is also a parallel with Hutcheson in Hume's ability to use Bayle's scepticism without falling prey to either its fideist or anti-nomian implications.

But the real genius of Hutcheson, and the source of his primary attraction for Hume, can be seen in his constructive efforts. It is his modification of the Lockian doctrine of the inner sense to include a new understanding of the reliability of man's interior senses of morality and aesthetics which promises a new confidence in human nature. In parallel fashion it is Hume's application of the Newtonian reliance upon natural law to Hutcheson's notion of the moral sense which so increases this confidence, at least for Hume, that the possibility of understanding human nature as reliable in itself, completely apart from external theistic or rationalistic supports, finally appears.

In conclusion, it will be the contention of this study that it is the dominance of this Hutchesonian element in Hume which must be regarded as one of the most novel and far-reaching dimensions of his thought. Of course it needs to be clearly recognized that the possibility for using Hutchesnn as a model for his "new scene" could not have occurred to Hume had it not been for his perception of the reliability of natural law provided by Newton's discoveries in physics. Without Newton's demonstrations of the reliability of the empirical method as a foundation for further investigation into the study of human nature, Hume would have been forced to support his study with a theistic metaphysic or to resign himself to scepticism. The fact that he attempts to separate himself from the Pyrrhonists is evidence of the confidence supplied by his appreciation of the Newtonian method. Thus Newton provides the ground upon which Hume's new view of human nature stands, but the figure which takes its place upon that ground is closer to Hutcheson's view of human nature than to any other.

It is within this Hutchesonian dimension of Hume's thought that the first hints at the formulation of a new model for metaphysical speculation appear. It will be our thesis that this dominance of the "biological over the physical analogies," signals the formulation of the formative direction in Hume. This direction might be said to culminate in the passages in the Dialogues where Hume, through Philo, remarks: "The world, say I, resembles an animal, therefore it is an animal, therefore it arose from generation."[1] But this is to get ahead of ourselves. Suffice it to say for the present that though these conclusions be somewhat tentative it will be the intention of the remainder of this study to demonstrate the profound importance of this Hutchesonian-biological note in Hume. For in this dynamic thrust of Hume's "new scene" can be glimpsed the antecedents of what was to become Whitehead's philosophy of organism.

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[1] David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, p. 180.

Chapter Three -- The Inadequacy of a Sensationalist Interpretation of Hume's "Purple Peroration" as a Criterion for Judging His Philosophy

1. The Problem of Hume's "Purple Peroration"

If we are to convincingly state the case for a more constructive assessment of Hume's philosophy, an assessment which views Hume from the standpoint of the less sceptical, Hutchesonian-biological emphasis, some effort must be made to counter the sceptical and sensationalist interpretation of Hume's philosophy. In particular we must respond to statements like this one of Whitehead's:

> Positivism has seized on Hume's atomism, with Hume himself as its leader. The task of science is explained to be merely the formulation of observed identities of pattern persistent and recurrent in each stream of experience... Hume adds that we expect the recurrences observed in the past, also to recur in the future. At this stage, Hotspur's question arises in our mind, "But will they come, when you do call for them?". To this question Hume, following the example of Glendower, returns no answer.[1]

A more elaborate response to Whitehead's specific criticisms of Hume's apparent positivism or sensationalism[2] will be given in the succeeding chapter. It is our intention here to demonstrate, by means of an analysis of fundamental doctrines in Hume, that this interpretation fails to apprehend Hume in all of his complexity.

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[1] A.I., p. 129.

[2] We have grouped these two terms together here, though they might be distinguished, because Whitehead treats them as if they were synonymous. In the main, Whitehead criticizes this approach because it leads to the dogmatic fallacy of regarding "strained attention to the patterns of sensa provided by the sense organs" (See Chapter 4, Section 1) as the only appropriate philosophic method. Whitehead's contention is that both sensationalists and positivists, in their preoccupation with sense data, unnecessarily circumscribe the limits of the experiential world. In what follows the terms, "sensationalist" and "positivist," will be used to refer to this Whiteheadian understanding.

With that intention in mind let us turn to that statement in Hume which has been regarded by many as the quintessence of Humian sensationalism, his "purple peroration."[1]

> When we run over Libraries, persuaded of these principles what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or Number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.[2]

Coming, as it does, at the conclusion of Hume's later, and in his own view, his only truly acceptable philosophical work,[3] it has been regarded by many as the paradigmatic statement of Hume's sensationalism. A. G. N. Flew remarks that if this statement were taken at face value, both the Treatise and the Inquiry would have to be "committed to the flames."[1] Evidently Flew agrees with Passmore's judgement that Hume argues "beyond his brief." However I think Flew exhibits a lack of caution, which Passmore retains, in making such a judgement for he runs the risk of compounding misinterpretation with further error by suggesting that there is some fundamental inconsistency in Hume's own philosophy. The Treatise and the Inquiry are not inconsistent with the requirements stated in the "purple peroration," provided that concluding statement is understood in terms of the new direction which we have sketched in the preceding chapter. But what, precisely, did Hume mean in this concluding statement?

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[1] A. G. N. Flew is responsible for coining this term. See op. cit., p. 270.

[2] Inq., p. 173.

[3] See E. C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 161f. (Hume publicly disavowed the Treatise in later years because of the controversy and misinterpretations it created.)

The terms, "abstract reasoning" and "experimental reasoning," are crucial to this question. And when one looks at these terms alone, it would appear that this peroration is indicative of a rather rigid sensationalism. "Abstract reasoning" obviously refers to Hume's discussion of certain knowledge. It is reminiscent of his exceedingly brief discussion of certain knowledge in the Treatise where he distinguishes between two classes of philosophical relations, those "such as depend entirely on the ideas, which we compare together, and such as may be chang'd without any change in the ideas."[2] In the pages which immediately precede this peroration, Hume appears to confirm this understanding of abstract reasoning.

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[1] A. G. N. Flew, op. cit., p. 270.

[2] Tr., p. 69.

> It seems to me, that the only objects of the abstract sciences or of demonstration are quantity and number, and that all attempts to extend this more perfect species of knowledge beyond these bounds are mere sophistry and illusion.[1]

Thus apparently, when Hume makes use of the term, "abstract reasoning," he is referring essentially to mathematics or to the discussion of analytic truths whose certainty can be readily ascertained by the comparison of ideas themselves, without appeal to empirical evidence.

"Experimental reasoning," is a term which Hume used frequently. The subtitle of the Treatise is stated, "an attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects." Undoubtedly Hume was referring here to the employment of Newton's scientific method. We have already noted Hume's intention to parallel Newton's discoveries in physics with an enquiry into the principles of human thought.[2] According to Newton's formulation of that method, "experimental reasoning" requires that one undertake an empirical observation of the facts, and then attempt to state the principles which seem to follow from such an observation. Finally Newton sought to deduce the mathematical consequences of such principles and to submit such mathematical consequences to empirical reconfirmation. Evidently Hume meant by "experimental reasoning," the observation of experience in search of fundamental principles and the empirical verification of the adequacy of such principles.

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[1] Inq., p. 171.

[2] See above, Chap. 2, Section 5,d.

Thus if this criterion were to be understood in this light alone, only those statements which are clearly analytic truths, or strictly logical questions, to put it another way; or those statements which permit a ready empirical verification are to be regarded as credible. Everything else must be regarded as tenuous and unreliable. With this type of interpretation of the "purple peroration" in mind it is easy to see why A. J. Ayer could inquire with regard to this same statement: "What is this but a rhetorical version of our own thesis that a sentence which does not express either a formally true proposition or an empirical hypothesis is devoid of literal significance?"[1]

However, such a positivist interpretation of the peroration leaves a great deal of Hume unexplained, or it dismisses much of his complexity with the charge that Hume is inconsistent or confused. That is not the conclusion of this essay. Therefore a much more careful scrutiny of the context in whibh the peroration appears seems to be required. This statement concludes Hume's final discussion of "Academical or Skeptical Philosophy." In this discussion Hume recounts the difficulties provoked by abstract reasoning's investigation of some of the more perplexing questions of natural existence, e.g., the problem of the origin of our ideas of space and time. Hume confesses his own confusion about the implications of such an investigation.

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[1] A. J. Ayer, op. cit., p. 54.

> Reason here seems to be thrown into a kind of amazement and suspense which, without the suggestions of any skeptic, gives her a diffidence of herself and on the ground on which she treads. She sees a full light which illuminates certain places, but that light borders upon the most profound darkness. And between these she is so dazzled and confounded, that she scarcely can pronounce with certainty and assurance concerning any one object.[1]

However, Hume concludes that the sceptical confusion engendered by a rigid application of the methods of abstract reasoning can be moderated if one is continually reminded that "The great subverter of Pyrrhonism, or the excessive principles of skepticism is action and employment."[2] Thus Hume is led to the statement of his own form of "mitigated" or "academical" scepticism, which he defines as follows:

> Another species of mitigated skepticism which may be of advantage to mankind, and which may be the natural result of the Pyrrhonian doubts and scruples, is the limitation of our inquiries to such subjects as are best adapted to the narrow capacity of the human understanding.[3]

Thus it is within the context of Hume's intention to describe the limits of human understanding, that Hume's "purple peroration" must be viewed. Within that context Hume suggests the proper limits for each of the several branches of human knowledge: arguments concerning the existence of any being concerning cause and effect and thus are founded upon experience; the sciences, natural philosophy, physics, chemistry, etc. inquire into qualities, causes, and effects of a whole species of objects and as such "could be said to treat of general facts"; divinity or theology has a foundation in reason so far as it is supported by experience, but its most solid foundation is faith; and finally, morals and criticism "are not so properly the objects of the understanding as of taste and sentiment."[1] Then as a means of providing a type of general rule for the appropriate limitation of our research in all of these fields, so that we might always be reminded of the "narrow capacity of our human understanding," Hume concludes with the sentences Flew has termed the "purple peroration."

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[1] Inq., p. 165.

[2] Inq., p. 167.

[3] Inq., p. 170.

However it should be clear that it was not Hume's intention that such a rule be interpreted in a rigidly sceptical or positivist manner. Here again Kemp Smith is correct in my estimate when he contends that it was Hume's intention to investigate and, if possible, systematically explain, the elements of the "vulgar consciousness," i.e., "the experience of the bodily space-time world, and of himself as standing within it in social relations with other selves."[2] In that endeavor Hume established two requirements, says Kemp Smith.[3] First he sought to present, in an exhaustive fashion, all of the simple factors, those not further analyzable, which compose the vulgar consciousness; and secondly, that in the attempt to explain the behavior of these factors nothing should be appealed to which has not already been shown to be a constituent of the "vulgar consciousness." The "purple peroration," thus, is nothing more nor less than Hume's stated intention to avoid the dangers of speculative metaphysics. He clearly had no intention of limiting investigation only to matters of logic or to the subject matter considered by the investigation of sense data alone, for in the statements immediately preceding this peroration Hume discusses the basis for investigating matters of religion, morality, and beauty, investigations which would all be outside the purview of a narrowly positivist or sensationalist philosophy. In short, it seems clear the "purple peroration" was intended primarily as a guarantee against the excesses of an unrestrained imagination. The sentences which shortly follow his statement about the narrow limits of the understanding would appear to confirm this interpretation of the peroration.

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[1] Inq., p. 172f.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 547.

[3] Ibid.

> The imagination of man is naturally sublime, delighted with whatever is remote and extraordinary, and running, without control, into the most distant parts of space and time in order to avoid the objects, which custom has rendered too familiar to it. A correct judgement observes a contrary method, and avoiding all distant and high inquiries, confines itself to common life, and to such subjects as fall under daily practise and experience; leaving the more sublime topics to the embellishment of poets and

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orators or to the arts of priests and politicians.[1] In brief, the peroration is Hume's attempt to apply the Newtonian "Method of Analysis"[2] to a study of the common thinking practices of men in everyday life. Like Newton, he sought to avoid the dangers present in speculative imagination, dangers which, for Hume, might arise as a result of failure to base his explanations upon elements which have a fundamental grounding in the content of the vulgar consciousness.

Now, to be sure, such an injunction to be true only to the "reflections of common life" is still fraught with many difficulties, which fact alone must be regarded as the basis for Hume's continued misinterpretation. For, as we shall see in the succeeding analysis, Hume continually encountered difficulties when he attempted to offer explanations of such "reflections." Kemp Smith contends[3] that the source of this difficulty arises from Hume's failure to recognize that the components of common experience do not always permit an exhaustive analysis when they are viewed solely as originating from simple impressions of sensation and reflection, and that all non-simple or complex experiences are reducible to such simples without remainder. We shall see how, repeatedly, in the discussion of the basis of our moral judgements, the causal connection, the doctrine of space and time, and the doctrine of belief, Hume is forced to state his reliance upon the orderliness of nature. Thus Hume speaks of the artificial though necessary basis for our moral judgements, of the commonly felt connection between cause and effect, of the universality of our notions of space and time, and of the universal acceptance accorded belief and the facility which seems to be everywhere present, which allows the mind to distinguish between ideas and fictions. In each of these instances Hume demonstrates the difficulty of attempting to regard each of these explanations of human thought as the outgrowth of some simple impression of reflection. Throughout each of these investigations Hume is forced to refer to something which can only be regarded as something more than a simple impression, something which defies final explanation and which must be regarded as an expression of his observance of his own, and mankind's, faith in the uniformity of nature. Thus Hume is led to develop the similar naturalistic bent which is prefigured in Francis Hutcheson. But does such reliance upon the uniformity of nature, complex and unexplained as it is, signal any inconsistency with the requirements stated in the "purple peroration"? Perhaps Flew's suggestion that Hume failed to meet the requirements of the peroration in his own works is evidence that he felt it did. It does not appear necessary to agree with Flew's judgement. As stated above, Hume had only committed himself to an examination of the contents of the "vulgar consciousness." His investigations empirically demonstrate the universality of this reliance upon the orderliness of nature, and in spite of the fact that such reliance seems frequently to defy explanation in terms of simple impressions, the fact that it is an observable, documentable fact that all men do in fact maintain such reliance clearly indicates that Hume did not overstep his own limits. It does mean that Hume must be regarded as espousing a type of naturalism which would appear to be in conflict with some sensationalist interpretations of his scepticism. But that apparent conflict is profound, for its resolution is only possible when one abandons the strict sensationalist or positivist estimate of Hume.

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[1] Inq., p. 170.

[2] See above, Chap. 2, Section 5, d.

[3] _Op. cit_., p. 548.

In short, Hume's "purple peroration" is not to be regarded as a positivist statement at all but as a paradigmatic statement of Hume's own "academical scepticism," a scepticism which combines both the revised view of the limits of rational enquiry and a deep-seated reliance upon the orderliness of nature. In Hume's own view such apparently conflicting elements are not to be regarded as irreconcilable at all. Hume seems to be fairly explicit about that. In the section of the Treatise devoted to "scepticism with regard to reason," Hume offers an explanation which clearly shows his understanding of the complementary roles of scepticism and naturalism.

> Should it here be ask'd me, whether I sincerely assent to this argument, which I seem to take such pains to inculcate, and whether I be really one of those sceptics, who hold that all is uncertain, and that our judgment is not in any thing possest of any measures of truth and falshood I shou'd reply, that this question is entirely superfluous, and that neither I, nor any other person was ever sincerely and constantly of that opinion. Nature, by an absolute and uncontroulable necessity has determin'd us to judge as well as to breathe and feel;... My intention then in displaying so carefully the argument of that fantastic sect (scepticism), is only to make the reader sensible of the truth of my hypothesis, that all our reasonings concerning causes and effects are deriv'd from nothing but custom; and that belief is more properly an act of the sensitive, than of the cogitative part of our natures.[1]

According to his own understanding, scepticism is a necessary astringent which prevents one from claiming too much for reason.[2] His empirical investigations also demonstrated to him, if to no one else, that this radically diminished estimate of the power of reason was not too great a loss. For reason was always interfering with the powers of common sense, which in the final analysis appeared to be a much m more reliable guide.

Is scepticism then merely the prolegomena to Humian naturalism, which finally must be regarded as the more fundamental motive in Hume? While such a conclusion appears tempting at times,[1] especially in view of the fact that when Hume encounters problems in providing an exhaustive analysis of the simple factors which underlie some of our more refractory notions he rest his analysis upon an appeal to nature, it really seems inappropriate to consider Hume fundamentally a naturalist. It may be the case that viscerally and personally[2] Hume was much closer to naturalism than to scepticism. But in terms of his philosophical work such a conclusion seems unwarranted. For Hume's naturalism remains undeveloped and although its role is crucial, Hume repeatedly disavows, as beyond the limits of human understanding, any attempt to adumbrate it. It may be argued that Hume perhaps lays the groundwork for a more complete understanding of naturalism, and this is the course which we will attempt to demonstrate as we suggest the congruity between certain Humian themes and certain Whiteheadian ones, but the naturalism is too implicit in Hume to say more than this. Perhaps it comes closer to the truth if we see in Hume the unique dual combination of scepticism and naturalism, a combination which had profound implications for later philosophy, but a combination which was not always free of confusion and ambiguity in Hume's own writing, and consequently a combination which was to be fundamentally misunderstood because of the seeming irreconciliability of its parts. However after this discussion of the context in which the "purple peroration" appears perhaps this combination does not seem so volatile. Scepticism and naturalism can go hand in hand, but only if one does away with the labels, "sensationalist" and "positivist," as descriptive of the quintessence of Hume.

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[1] Tr., p. 183.

[2] No doubt such an appeal was much needed in the eighteenth century, which was frequently unnecessarily enthusiastic about our rational capacities. (See Chap. 2, Section 2.)

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[1] See for example, A. G. N. Flew's contention, in the discussion of the implications of Hume's "purple peroration," that Hume's scepticism is really a kind of "scientific naturalism." Op. cit., p. 272.

[2] The interview with James Boswell, which Hume gave on his deathbed would indicate a strong personal reliance upon the order of nature. (See Appendiz A to Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, Library of Liberal Arts edition, p. 76f.)

2. A Survey of Humian Doctrines

The aim of this investigation of central doctrines in Hume is two-fold. First, we will attempt to show how a narrowly positivist or sensationalist interpretation of the criteria which is included in the "purple peroration" overlooks the major thrust of Hume's "new scene of thought," his naturalism. Secondly, in accordance with Kemp Smith's estimate of the two stages in Hume's program; (1) the investigation of behavior in search of simple, underived factors and, (2) the attempt to explain behavior in terms of these simples, we shall demonstrate the direction, as well as some of the difficulties, present in Hume's naturalism.

The doctrines which will be discussed: the moral sense, causal relations, space and time, and belief are fundamental to Hume's purposes. The moral sense was an issue which Hume carried over from previous sources, as we have seen above in our discussion of the importance of Francis Hutcheson, and it becomes the significant influence on much of Hume's later writing. The discussion of space and time also shows the influence of Hutcheson, says Kemp Smith.[1] It is significant for it effectively demonstrates Hume's disavowal of a rigid sensationalism. The causal doctrine and the doctrine of belief are also central to Hu Hume's purposes because they effectively document Hume's naturalistic thesis that it is the passions, not reason, which are the more formative influences in human thought.

a. The doctrine of moral sense

In the previous chapter we indicated that one of the notions which Hume found appealing amongst his philosophical predecessors was the doctrine of moral sense. It should be clear from the allusions which we have already made to Shaftesbury and Hutcheson that the former figure, in particular, frequently engaged in flights of imaginative speculation of the very type which Hume sought to avoid in his "purple peroration."[2] Although Hume attempted to modify the views of Hutcheson to suit his own purposes, it becomes clear as one surveys his discussion of the basis for our moral judgements that Hutcheson's naturalistic appeal to the notion of moral sense, as bearing a direct analogy to the physical senses,[1] is still present in Hume. Thus it is in this portion of Hume's analysis that he could be said to be transcending the limits of narrow sensationalism. However, prior to this naturalistic appeal, Hume does offer what appears to be a sensationalist account of the basis for our moral judgements, an account which produces sceptical conclusions.

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, op. cit., p. 279f.

[2] See Shaftesbury's ecstaticism about nature for example. (Chap. 2, Section 2)

This analysis proceeds as follows. In accordance with his desire to uncover the simple factors which underlie our moral judgements, Hume first undertakes an analysis of moral "ideas" using the method of abstract reasoning. He suggests that one examine the factors which compose the notion that patricide is a vicious moral "idea."[2] Patricide, as an idea alone, involves the killing of a parent by a child. But, says Hume, there seems to be no basis for the moral condemnation of patricide in this "idea" itself. For example, it is commonly acknowledged that a man who kills his father is guilty of the most heinous crime; however an oak sapling which gradually chokes its parent tree off from the sunlight is not the subject of moral reproach. How can this be if it is the case that the same "relation" holds between a burgeoning oak sapling and its parent tree and a murderous son and his father? Now the

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[1] See above, Chap. 2, Section 5, a.

[2] Tr., p. 467f.

the fact that the son is motivated to commit such a crime by an act of will, while an oak tree's "act" is guided by certain natural and involuntary principles, does not merit consideration. The point at issue here is whether there is some factor in the moral "idea" of patricide which causes us to regard it as morally reprehensible. The fact that the two different instances of patricide arise from different causes does not alter the fact that the same moral "idea" is present in both cases. The fact that in one instance patricide is the most heinous crime imaginable and in the other is accorded no moral reprobation whatsoever demonstrates that there can be nothing in moral "ideas" themselves which could be regarded as the simple factor underlying our moral judgements.

After thus demonstrating the difficulty of exposing the simple factors which underlie moral judgements by means of abstract reasoning, Hume next shifts his analysis to what appears to be a phenomenological investigation of human moral actions. Using the methods of experimental reasoning, he asks, why it is that we find it just to repay a loan?[1] Certainly, says Hume, it is not the case that one wants to be just because one wants to be virtuous, because then there would have to be some antecedent virtue which leads one to approve being virtuous. Hume's point is that if we are to discover the basis behind our sense of justice we must discover some natural influence in man, which all men, even men in an uncivilized state, appear to possess. However, men in an uncivilized state would feel no compunctions about honoring virtue for its own sake alone. It would still be appropriate for a man in such an uncivilized state to ask: "Wherein consists this honesty and justice which you find in restoring a loan, and abstaining from the property of others?"[1] Thus, to argue that men are just because they desire to be virtuous simply begs the question.

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[1] Tr., p. 480f.

Next Hume concludes that it cannot be that acting justly is always correct because it provides for one's own private interests, because private interests, taken solely by themselves, could hardly be productive of morality, since they frequently are employed for selfish purposes which are productive of the most insidious immorality. Neither can it be said that one feels it is just to return a loan because it is in the public interest. For a loan is not public, and for the most part, says Hume, the public does not seem to evidence any great love for humanity in general. Hume's phenomenological or experimental investigation has thus revealed the difficulty of tracing morality to some simple, observable factor. Neither the desire to be virtuous, itself, nor concern for one's own private interests, nor concern for the public good could be regarded as this simple factor. This much of his investigation represents Hume's employment of abstract and empirical reasoning, as a means of demonstrating the sceptical consequences which follow from such an analysis. But there is a complement for such scepticism and it is in this analysis in particular that Hume demonstrates in what sense he transcends the limits of a narrow sensationalism.

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[1] *Ibid.*

Hume is led to present this non-sceptical or naturalistic account of morality by the same factors which were operative in his preceding survey of the difficulty of locating the basis for morality in moral "ideas" or in singular motives of human action, namely Hume's desire to present in all its detail the fundamental constituents of the "vulgar consciousness." From that point of view, and in so far as one interprets the "purple peroration" from that point of view, it cannot be argued that this latter part of Hume's study is inconsistent with the requirements stated there.

With this understanding of the "vulgar consciousness" in view Hume confesses that the sense of morality seems to be a universal characteristic of such consciousness.

> We may only affirm on this head, that if ever there was anything which could be call'd natural(common) in this sense, the sentiments of morality certainly may; since there never was any nation of the world, nor any single person in any nation, who was utterly depriv'd of them, and who never, in any instance, shew'd the least approbation or dislike of manners. These sentiments are so rooted in our constitution and temper, that without entirely confounding the

> human mind by disease or madness, 'tis impossible to extirpate and destroy them.[1]

In addition as we have already noted, Hume considered himself a "friend of virtue."[2] Thus there was in his own mind this additional inclination to seek more diligently for more than a sceptical account of the basis for our moral judgements. Thus it is that Hume is led to discuss the influence of the passions upon our moral judgements. Upon first inspection, the passions would appear to be a poor place upon which to found our moral judgements, for as Hume had already indicated a passionate self-interest could hardly be said to be moral. Thus Hume is led to conclude that morality must be an "artificial" or conditioned impulse.

> Unless, therefore, we will allow, that nature has establish'd a sophistry, and render'd it necessary and unavoidable, we must allow, that the sense of justice and injustice is not deriv'd from nature, but arises artificially, tho' necessarily from education and human conventions.[3]

However, Hume's juxtaposing of the terms, "artificial" and "necessary," indicates that he has something unique in mind in this discussion of the influence of human conventions. His point is that though social conventions act as a constraint upon the profligate exercise of our passions, such conventions should not be interpreted as being foreign to the passions themselves. On the contrary, he argues; "Nor is such a restraint contrary to these passions; for if so, it cou'd never be enter'd into, nor maintain'd; but it is only contrary to their heedless and impetuous movement."[1] Hume's point is not only that the conventions provide a check upon the passions but that the conventions themselves also issue in a passion which is congenial to morality. The product of such conventions is a passion which Hume terms, "a general sense of common interest."[2] As a passion it is a form of sympathy. It is this sense, says Hume, "which all the members of the society express to one another, and which induces them to regulate their conduct by certain rules."[3] Thus Hume is led to conclude that there is a type of natural balance between the influence of human conventions and the influence of the native human passions. And it is in the coincidence of these two influences that the natural sentiment which must be regarded as the basis for morality arises.

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[1] Tr., p. 474.

[2] See the letter to Hutcheson discussed in Chap. 2, Section 5, a.

[3] Tr., p. 483.

> Thus self-interest is the original motive to the establishment of justice: but a sympathy with public interest is the source of the moral approbation, which attends that virtue... Any artifice of politicians may assist mature in the producing of those sentiments... but 'tis impossible it should be the sole cause of the distinction we make betwixt vice and virtue. For if nature did not aid us in this particular, 'twou'd be in vain for

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[1] Tr., p. 489. [2] Tr., p. 490.

[3] *Ibid*. (There is an interesting similarity between this notion of Hume's and Rousseau's doctrine of the general will, see below)

> politicians to talk of *honourable or dishonourable, praiseworthy or blameable*... The utmost politicians can perform, is, to extend the natural sentiments beyond their original bounds; but still nature must furnish the materials, and give us some notion of moral distinctions.[1]

It is in this discussion that Hume is most reminiscent of Francis Hutcheson. His discussion of the "general sense of common interest" directly corresponds to Hutcheson's doctrine of the moral sense, which also is founded upon the passion of sympathy. Like Hutcheson, Hume was clearly of the opinion that the seat of all moral judgements is not reason but feeling. Says Hume, "...To have a sense of virtue, is nothing but to *feel* a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character."[2] Thus we are led to make moral distinctions upon the basis of the feeling of pleasure or pain which the contemplation of certain actions evokes within us. Hume is not arguing that pleasure and pain thus become moral.[3] They are only the efficient causes of this "general sense of common interest" which is the foundation of all our moral judgements. However, as was the case with Hutcheson, this founding of moral judgements upon natural feeling allows Hume to project a naturalistic explanation for morality. Thus he is able to avoid the contention that founding morality upon conventions renders morality arbitrary or expedient. He can even go so far as to say...

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[1] Tr., p. 499f. [2] Tr., p. 471.

[3] See N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 163. (Kemp Smith contends that Hume is not developing a form of hedonism which is a theory of desire. Hume is only suggesting that sentiments are the efficient causes of action, they are not the desired ends themselves.)

> Tho' the rules of justice be artificial, they are not arbitrary. Nor is the expression improper to call them Laws of Nature; if by natural we understand what is common to any species, or even if we confine it to mean what is inseparable from the species.[1]

How does such a survey of Hume's doctrine of moral sense meet the aims which we seek to set forth in this study? First, it illustrates the inadequacy of regarding the sensationalist interpretation of Hume's "purple peroration" as an accurate characterization of his philosophy. A sensationalist application of abstract and experimental reasoning yields only sceptical conclusions about the basis for our moral judgements. They do not reside in moral "ideas" themselves, nor does there appear to be a simple factor observable on a purely phenomenological survey of our moral actions which could be said to provide the origin for our moral judgements. Concern for self-interest or the public good are ambivalent influences not consistently productive of moral behavior. But what of Hume's discovery of the phenomenon of sympathy which issues in his "general sense of common interest"? Isn't this factor discoverable by means of a purely phenomenological survey? It is, to be sure, but the use which Hume makes of this factor transcends the limits of a narrow sensationalism. And it is in this sense that our second aim is illustrated. It is only when the notion of sympathy is understood in a naturalistic way that is could be said to perform the function which Hume desires it to perform. As we have already seen this phenomenon of sympathy issues in moral judgements only because sympathy is the outgrowth of a natural balance between the individual passions (e.g., self-interest) and the social conventions which are established artificially through education. This fact illustrates both the intention and the difficulty present in Hume's naturalism.

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[1] Tr., p. 484.

It reveals that Hume has only been partially successful in his attempt to model Newton's "Method of Analysis." For while he has uncovered a factor which seems decisive in the production of our moral judgements, such a factor is hardly the simple, easily defined factor which a truly scientific analysis requires. It is dependent upon the incredibly complex balancing of the relations between the individual and his society. In addition, to insist that this factor is primary also requires one to espouse a type of faith in the uniformity of nature and to suggest that there is a type of harmony between a naturalistic view of man and a social or political understanding of man. In short, it commits Hume to a type of naturalism which is not unlike that of some of his eighteenth century contemporaries. In particular, Hume's doctrine of the "general sense of common interest" is reminiscent of Rousseau's doctrine of the general will. And in this discussion of the basis of justice, Hume makes some comments which are not unlike

Rousseau. He contends[1] that though the whole notion of man's first existing in a golden state of nature must be regarded as a fiction, nevertheless there is an insight into the nature of man's moral behavior present in this fiction, for it illustrates in what way a natural balance may be said to exist between individual passions and the social conventions. Hume's point is that apparently the poets understood the sense in which even man's social conventions may be said to have their origin in this fundamental influence of nature. Such a statement is certainly not far from Rousseau's discussion of the natural basis for morality and government.[2] Thus Hume's naturalistic estimate of the origin of our moral judgements clearly demonstrates that he cannot be considered a sensationalist or a positivist, according to the manner in which Whitehead has regarded those terms as applying to him. Hume does make use of an analysis which has its origin in sensationalism, but he clearly transcends the limits of such a methodology, for his naturalism clearly resides upon something more than a "strained attention to the patterns of sensa provided by the sense organs."[1]

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[1] Tr., p. 494.

[2] Perhaps it is not widely known that Hume and Rousseau enjoyed a profound sense of admiration for one another, though this admiration was to suffer difficulties because of the political vicissitudes of the time. (See E. C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 507f, for an interesting account of the relationship between these two seemingly disparate figures.)

b. The doctrine of the causal relation

Hume's discussion of causality is still popularly regarded as presenting the most extreme form of scepticism imaginable. Some who continue to labor under misapprehension have gone so far as to claim that Hume denies the possibility of causal connection altogether. He does not do that; on the contrary, it is his intention to demonstrate that the causal connection has its origin in our beliefs and feelings. Thus as was the case, with his investigation of the basis for our moral judgements, Hume presents us with a naturalistic understanding of causality. The fact that there is this correspondence between Hume's discussion of the moral sense and his discussion of causality is no coincidence. Kemp Smith contends that it was Hume's investigation of moral topics which served to open the "new scene of thought" to Hume.[2] He argues that it is this discovery of the role of the passions in our moral judgements which led Hume to seek to apply the same understanding to other dimensions of human experience.

Our investigation of Hume's discussions seems to corroborate Kemp Smith's conclusions. Here again Hume's quest for some simple factor which could be said to originate the causal connection is evident. It is also the case that Hume's argument follows much the same pattern as does the discussion of the moral sense. A narrowly sensationalist application of abstract and experimental reasoning yields only sceptical conclusions about the existence of some simple factor, present in ideas themselves or in experience, considered once again in something approximating a phenomenological survey. Hume then concludes in a naturalistic fashion that the origin of our notion of causality must therefore reside in something more closely approximating a psychological or naturalistic belief than a strictly logical form of causal inference. Thus it is possible once more to observe Hume's transcending of the limits prescribed by a narrowly positivist or sensationalist interpretation of the "purple peroration."

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[1] See above, Chap. 3, Section 1.

[2] N. Kemp Smith, op. cit., p. 12f.

As was the case in the preceding discussion, Hume first inquires about the possibility of some basis for causal inference in the "idea" of causality itself.[1] The "idea" of causality is problematic from the outset. The fact that almost every object which we deal with could be said to exist, at one time or another, in a causal connection with some other object means that it is impossible to cite some unique and simple factor which could be said to characterize the "idea" of causality. Thus Hume concludes that the causal connection must originate in some notions about the relation between objects which are said to be causally connected. Hume concludes[1] that the two relations of contiguity ("that nothing can operate in a time or place, which is ever so little remov'd from those of its existence")[2] and priority in time of cause before effect, appear to be universal accompaniments of our idea of causal connection. However, Hume confesses his dissatisfaction with this rational investigation for neither of these relations could be said to provide that simple factor which exhaustively defines the basis for our perception of causal connection. Thus it is that Hume concludes that there is an even more profound relation which could be said to operate in causality, the relation of necessary connection. He considers the several rational arguments which have been proposed to document the necessity of causal connection.[3] The arguments which are assigned to Hobbes, Clarke, and Locke all suffer from the same defect, says Hume, in that they beg the question. They argue respectively, that a necessary connection between cause and effect must exist because, without such a connection either nothing could come into existence (Hobbes), or each thing would have to be the cause of itself (Clarke), or each thing would have to be produced by nothing (Locke). In each instance the idea of necessary connection has been assumed in the premises of the argument. Says Hume, "But 'tis the very point in question whether every thing must have a cause or not; and therefore, according to all just reasoning it ought never to be taken for granted."[1] And here Hume concludes his investigation of the "idea" of causality, considered by itself. His estimate is that an investigation which employs the methods of abstract reasoning produces only inconclusive results and thus he must expand his field of research.

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[1] Tr., p. 74.

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[1] Tr., p. 75.

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] Tr., p. 80f.

> Since it is not from knowledge or any scientific reasoning, that we derive the opinion of the necessity of a cause to every new production, that opinion must necessarily arise from observation and experience. The next question, then shou'd naturally be, how experience gives rise to such a principle?[2]

In this empirical investigation of the "component parts of our reasonings concerning causes and effects," Hume investigates the varying influences of the impressions of sense, memory, and imagination. He concludes that there can be nothing present in any object itself which implies the existence of any other object. Thus "'tis therefore by experience only, that we can infer the existence of one object from that of another."[3] And he comes upon yet another relation which appears to be operative in the causal connection, the relation of constant conjunction.[4] For example, Hume argues, that we discover from past experience that we have become accustomed to experiencing one species of object to be always precedent and contiguous to another, so much so that these two species are "constantly conjoined" in our thinking. We only need to be presented with the impression of flame and we immediately infer its accompanying impression of heat. However, though this relation would appear to be fundamental to causal connection, it too suffers the same difficulties which have been observed with regard to the relations of contiguity and priority. It too fails to provide the simple factor which could be said to underlie causal connection. For the experience of constant conjunction yields no necessity, in the strict logical sense of that term. Hume argues: "From the mere repetition of any past impression, even to infinity, there never will arise any new original idea, such as that of necessary connexion; and the number of impressions has in this case no more effect than if we confin'd ourselves to one only."[1] But, in spite of these sceptical conclusions, Hume urges no despair for he maintains his own faith that there must be some fundamental basis for our perception of the causal connection. And he hints, intriguingly, "Perhaps 'twill appear in the end, that the necessary connexion depends upon the (causal) inference, instead of the inference's depending on the necessary connexion."[2]

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[1] Tr., p. 81.

[2] Tr., p. 82.

[3] Tr., p. 87

[4] Ibid.

In the succeeding analysis Hume digresses from this intriguing hint to discuss the nature of belief and the question of probability. Since we shall discuss this matter separately, in the next section of this chapter, this part of the argument can be omitted here. For when Hume does return to the discussion of necessary connection he takes up where he left off with regard to the priority of causal inference as the source of necessity. However, some care should be exercised in the use of this term, inference, for it soon becomes clear that Hume is not discussing logical inference, rather he is attempting to speak in a naturalistic fashion of the influence of belief which causes us to infer a causal connection. Thus it is here that Hume again makes use of naturalism to complement and mitigate the sceptical conclusions of his previous investigations. In particular, Hume presents two definitions of causality.

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[1] Tr., p. 88. [2] *Ibid*.

The first definition might be said to be an attempt to frame a strictly logical understanding of the causal connection. On its basis alone one must remain sceptical about the necessity which is said to apply to causal inferences.

> If we define a cause to be an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are plac'd in a like relation of priority and contiguity to those objects, that resemble the latter; we may easily conceive that there is no absolute nor metaphysical necessity, that every beginning of existence shou'd be attended with such an object.[1]

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[1] Tr., p. 172.

The second definition provides the naturalistic complement to such scepticism. It arises out of Hume's firm conviction that there can be but one kind of necessity, "that the common distinction betwixt moral and physical necessity is without foundation in nature,"[1] and furthermore that such necessity is more properly found in the mind than in objects.[2] Hume's argument for this conclusion appears as follows.

> The idea of necessity arises from some impression. There is no impression convey'd by our sense, which can give rise to that idea. It must, therefore, be deriv'd from some internal impression, or impression of reflexion. There is no internal impression, which has any relation to the present business, but that propensity which custom produces, to pass from an object to the idea of its usual attendant. This therefore is the essence of necessity. Upon the whole necessity is something that exists in the mind, not in objects; nor is it possible for us ever to form the most distant idea of it, consider'd as a quality in bodies.[3]

And it is on the basis of this conclusion that Hume provides his second definition of causality: "An object precedent and contiguous to another and so united with it in the imagination that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other."[1]

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[1] Tr., p. 171.

[2] It is easy to see what a short step it is from this conclusion of Hume's to Kant's analysis, within the canon of pure reason, of the mental principles which undergird our inference from cause to effect. However this is not to imply that Hume and Kant are in fundamental agreement about this matter. (See the discussion in Chap. 5, Section 2,b.)

[3] Tr., p. 165.

Some, among them Kemp Smith, have suggested that in this offering of what amounts essentially to a psychological definition of causality, Hume is guilty of substituting psychological answers for logical ones. Karl Aschenbrenner[2] takes issue with Kemp Smith's judgement. He argues that though Hume offers two definitions of causality it is not correct to assume that Hume sought to provide psychological answers to logical questions since the two types of answers are clearly separated in Hume. In brief, Hume's psychological definition of causality is not offered as a substitute for the absence of any statement of logical necessity. Hume suggests that while we have no logical guarantee of the certainty of the causal connection, we do have a forceful and effective belief that every cause is accompanied by its effect. However, belief is not knowledge. It cannot even rightly be considered a substitute for it, for belief involves a different type of activity altogether, dealing with feelings no cognitions. But this fact illustrates the naturalistic direction of Hume's program and the manner in which it is regarded as a complement to scepticism. Thus, Aschenbrenner's defense of Hume reveals the complementary character of Hume's psychological definition of causality.

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[1] Tr., p. 172.

[2] See Karl Aschenbrenner, "Psychologism in Hume," Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. II, No. 42, Jan., 1961, pp. 28-38.

In terms of the aims which this chapter seeks to accomplish, it is possible to see how once again Hume transcends the limits of a narrow positivist interpretation of the "purple peroration." As was the case in the investigation of the doctrine of the moral sense, it is possible to see how Hume's employment of a sensationalist or positivist investigation of the idea of causality, as well as an empirical survey of the observable characteristics of our reasoning processes, yields no logical basis for our conviction that there is a necessary connection between cause and effect. The scepticism which such a methodology reveals is inescapable. And this scepticism remains unassuaged. However Hume does not despair; he reveals that the human race does have other sources of confidence about the necessity which appears to characterize causality. However such confidence is not strictly cognitive. And in the passages which immediately succeed his psychological definition of causality he gives some expression to the foundation for this confidence. In Book I, Part III, Section XVI, entitled "of the reason of animals," Hume once more illustrates his faith in the uniformity of nature. He contends that "beasts are endow'd with thought and reason as well as man."[1] And he further expresses his faith by concluding:

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[1] Tr., p. 176.

> To consider the matter aright, reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls, which carries us along a certain train of ideas and endows them with particular qualities according to their particular situations and relations.[1]

No doubt Hume felt constrained to offer this statement because of the limited success of his attempt to provide an analysis of the simple factors which underlie the causal relation. Once again his study can only be regarded as partially scientific in that he was unable to provide an understanding of such a simple factor. Belief and custom are complex phenomena, not easily describable in terms of the Newtonian model of principles and rules. In spite, or perhaps because of that, Hume does offer an attempt to state the rules which apply to the causal inference.[2] However it is this very failure to fully accomplish the Newtonian parallel which most graphically documents the point which we are attempting to make. The fact that Hume is finally forced to rest his case upon an appeal to nature, ("reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct") illustrates the fallacy of arguing that Hume is a narrow sensationalist, according to Whitehead's estimate. For in such an appeal, Hume indicates once more that it is not immediate sense data themselves, but this confidence in Nature's uniformity which allows Hume to argue as he does.

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[1] Tr., p. 179.

[2] For a more complete discussion of the implications of this discussion of rules see Appendix B.

c. The doctrine of belief

In the preceding analysis of causality it is possible to see how Hume's understanding of causal necessity rests upon his notion that the mind imputes this necessity to objects as a result of the influence of our beliefs. In the succeeding discussion we shall see how Hume attempts to discover the simple factors which underlie the workings of belief. Once again, the same Humian pattern of analysis presents itself. An investigation of the nature of knowledge itself, by means of the method of abstract reasoning reveals the limits of the respective realms of knowledge and belief. This is a profound discussion because, while it reveals the true genius of Hume's "new scene" in his perception of the limits of reason, it also reveals some of the difficulties presented by an insufficiently thorough understanding of the relationship of influence between belief and knowledge. Thus Hume concludes his discussion, once more, with an investigation, by means of experimental reason, of the influence of our feelings and common sense opinions.

This doctrine proceeds first of all from Hume's abstract analysis of the distinction which separates knowledge from belief. As we indicated above, Hume's discussion of certain knowledge in the Treatise is brief in the extreme. Abstract reasoning provides four types of "relations of ideas" which could be said to offer certain knowledge.

They are the relations of resemblance, degrees in quality, contrariety, and degrees in quantity and number. However there is some question about the certainty of the knowledge provided by even these four relations since even here subjective influences seem to play a role in influencing our opinions about the certainty which they provide.

Resemblance, the first relation which Hume suggests is capable of yielding certain knowledge, is treated succinctly. It is a relation which is apprehended directly through an impression of the similarities between objects.

> When any objects resemble each other, the resemblance will at first strike the eye, or rather the mind; and seldom requires a second examination.[1]

Resemblance plays a fundamental role in Hume's philosophy. It is this relation which Hume contends is the operative principle underlying his discussion of the association of ideas. However, the unfortunate success of that discussion in Hume reveals that its final adequacy as the basis for certain knowledge is open to serious question.[2] The fact that this early discussion of the role of resemblance with regard to the realm of certain knowledge preceded the final abandonment of his discussion of the association of ideas may reveal why he could speak of resemblance here in such an uncomplicated way.

The second relation, degrees in quality, appears to have the same characteristics about it. Hume says:

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[1] Tr., p. 70.

[2] See below, Chap. 4, Section 3,b.

> And tho' it be impossible to judge exactly of the degrees of any quality, such as colour, taste, heat, cold, when the difference betwixt them is very small; yet 'tis easy to decide, that any of them is superior or inferior to another, when their difference is considerable. And this decision we always pronounce at first sight, without any enquiry or reasoning.[1]

The way in which the mind functions in an almost mechanistic way is made explicit in this passage. The awareneas of differences of degree appears to be registered upon the mind in an almost automatic fashion without the need for judgements of measurement.

The third relation, contrariety, is problematic, largely because it is dealt with in such cryptic fashion. Hume assumes that his meaning is so clear that he only devotes a sentence to it: "No one can once doubt but existence and non-existence destroy each other, and are perfectly incompatible and contrary."[2] But here is another instance of ambiguity in Hume. Apparently Hume is referring to the relation of logical contradiction. Though if that be the case, it is deceiving to call the relation "contrariety." He compounds his difficulties when he suggests that the relation is discovered by observing the contrast between existence and non-existence. In Aristotelian logic logical contradiction has nothing to do with existence and non-existence. Clearly, Hume is pointing to a relation whose grounding in matters of fact is more certain than it is within "relations of ideas."

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[1] Tr., p. 70. [2] Tr., p. 70.

The final relation, degrees in quantity and number, does seem capable of providing certain knowledge by reference to the comparison of ideas alone. Evidently, it is this relation which Hume seems to regard with the greatest certainty because it is the relation which he mentions most frequently when he refers to the function of abstract reasoning. The disciplines which deal with such a relation are algebra and arithmetic. Hume describes their function as follows:

> When two numbers are so combin'd, as that the one has always an unite answering to every unite of the other, we pronounce them equal; and'tis for want of such a standard of equality in extension, that geometry can scarce be esteem'd a perfect and infallible science.[1]

The abstractness of algebra and arithmetic seemed to guarantee their certainty for Hume, but geometry seemed to him to rest upon the science of measurement, which was less than exact. In the same manner, perhaps his awareness of the way in which the first three relations were also dependent upon empirical factors caused him to make very limited claims for their reliability.

So by means of abstract reasoning Hume has been able to circumscribe the realm of certain knowledge markedly. In the final analysis only mathematical knowledge is capable of providing us with absolute certainty. But even here Hume is sceptical. Hume seemed to feel that the very act of determining whether the knowledge which we profess to know with certainty is actually knowledge is an act with a type of subjective, or matter of fact character about it. Thus with regard to even mathematics and algebra Hume was led to say:

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[1] Tr., p. 71.

> There is no Algebraist nor Mathematician so expert in his science as to place entire confidence in any truth immediately upon his discovery of it, or regard it as anything, but a mere probability. Everytime he runs over his proof, his confidence encreases; but still more by the approbation of his friends; and is rais'd to its utmost perfection by the universal assent and applauses of the learned world. Now 'tis evident that this gradual encrease of assurance is nothing but the addition of new probabilities and is derived from the constant union of causes and effects, according to past experience and observation... *Since therefore all knowledge resolves itself into probability, and becomes at last of the same nature with that evidence which we employ in common life*.[1]

Clearly there was some confusion in Hume's mind between certain knowledge and the process which is employed in arriving at certain truth. He failed to recognize that because the human mind is frequently influenced by subjective factors, such as the support or criticism of one's friends,[2] this does not mean that all knowledge is therefore reduced to probability. There is after all a distinction between logical truth and the discussion about the methods which logicians employ to discover that truth. Hume knew this, but here apparently his critical impulses got the better of him. For what he was attempting to say was that reason simply cannot be uncritically regarded as sovereign in any but the most circumscribed sense.[1] Hence the certainty provided by knowledge strictly defined is important, but it is also the case that the certainty provided by belief takes on a new significance when this distinction is made. For it means that much that man professes to know must rest upon something less than absolute certainty.

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[1] Tr., p. 181. (Italics mine.)

[2] The support and criticism of one's friends was an issue which carried considerable significance for Hume since so much of what he wrote received only minimal discussion and treatment by his contemporaries. And those who did comment often completely misunderstood him. (See Chap. 2, Section 3.)

However, when one examines the attempt to investigate the basis of our beliefs which Hume supplies by means of the employment of experimental reason the difficulty which we have observed confronting Hume in previous discussions concerning the possibility of uncovering the simple factors responsible for some of our most refractory notions appears once again. Hume is able to discover that it is an empirical fact that belief is accepted as a reliable source of information about affairs in the world of matters of fact, but when Hume attempts to locate and explain the simple factor which underlies the workings of belief, once more he is faced with a complexity which seems to prevent him from accomplishing his aims.

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[1] It was for this reason that Hume regarded both sides of the controversy between the sceptics and the dogmatists as wrong; neither side seemed to have a correct understanding of the proper limits of reason, for they both over-exaggerated its scope. The sceptics did so critically, the dogmatists positively.

Hume's early discussion of belief seems simple enough. He defines belief; "a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression."[1] But it soon becomes evident that such deceptively simple words mask a good deal of confusion about the precise character of belief. Hume's interpreters have provided several interpretations of his doctrine, and because this doctrine plays such a decisive role in Hume's thought perhaps it would be prudent to take into account some of the different understandings which have arisen in order to make clear our own interpretation of that doctrine.

Perhaps the most authoritative interpretations are offered by Norman Kemp Smith and J. A. Passmore. Kemp Smith's is presaged by one offered by William Elkin in 1904.[2] Elkin's theory is that there is a transition in Hume between the Treatise and the Inquiry. He maintains that in the Treatise belief is discussed in terms of the force and vivacity of our ideas. In the Inquiry Hume treats belief in terms of the different manner in which the mind "feels" our ideas. Kemp Smith expands upon Elkin's interpretation. He suggests that in the Treatise itself, belief is explained in terms of vivacity and liveliness while in the Appendix to that same work and in the *Inquiry* belief is explained in terms of an "attitude of mind."[1] Apparently the contention which underlies both these interpretations is that Hume moved from an early understanding which located the persuasiveness of our beliefs in the ideas themselves to a later understanding in which belief is attributed to a mechanism operative in the human understanding. In particular, Kemp Smith contends that Hume follows Newton when he talks about perception and Hutcheson when he speaks of an "attitude of mind."

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[1] Tr., p. 96.

[2] William Baird Elkin, Hume: The Relation of the Treatise of Human Nature - Book I - To the Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding, New York, 1904, pp. 175f.

J. A. Passmore contends that Hume discusses three different theories of belief all of which appear early in the *Treatise*.[2] He maintains that all are complementary and none is finally abandoned. The theories are; first, that belief is nothing but a more vivid and intense conception of any idea, second that belief is a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression, and thirdly, that belief arises only from causation.

My interpretation follows Passmore more closely than the others. It is exceedingly difficult to attempt to discuss the development of doctrines in Hume because so much of what he wrote shows the influence of continuous revision and expansion. Also it is clear especially in the *Treatise*, that much of what Hume says has an inchoate character about it. The Inquiry may be regarded as more precise in many respects, but it is difficult to demonstrate any great change in precision regarding the statement of this notion of belief. For example, in the note which follows the initial definition of belief in the Treatise, "a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression," Hume adds:

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 234f.

[2] J. A. Passmore, *op. cit*., p. 71.

> This act of the mind has never yet been explain'd by any philosopher; and therefore I am at liberty to propose my hypothesis concerning it; which is, that 'tis only a strong and steady conception of any idea, and such as approaches in some measure to an immediate impression.[1]

Such a comment would appear to confound anyone who attempted to maintain that because in the later Inquiry he regards belief as an act of mind he has altered his theory. For here in the Treatise, he suggests that belief is an act of mind, but that it is really analogous to the force and vivacity which is received from immediate impressions.

Furthermore Kemp Smith's comment about the differing influences of Newton and Hutcheson really does not clarify matters. We have already demonstrated the difficulty of suggesting causal links between Hume and the various individuals he mentions in an admiring fashion. No doubt Newton and Hutcheson played fundamental roles in shaping Hume's views but it seems nearly impossible to assign different doctrines in Hume specifically to their influence. Hume was too independent a thinker to borrow so explicitly from anyone else.

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[1] Tr., p. 97.

Perhaps the matter can be most quickly resolved by noting that the doctrine of belief is the element in Hume which most dramatically expresses his reliance upon the uniformity of nature. And we have already seen how this naturalistic element allows Hume to explain the basis upon which our moral judgements are made, as well as the discussion of the manner in which we infer causal necessity. We shall next see how an appeal to the uniformity of nature also permits Hume to explain our sensations of space and time. Thus it is possible to examine the several different ways in which Hume uses this doctrine to accomplish his naturalistic intentions. But in the last analysis it must be admitted that we can never finally grasp, in simple fashion, the basis for Hume's appeal to nature as it is presented in the doctrine of belief.

Thus perhaps the most fruitful course would be to attempt to discover the several ways in which Hume finds belief functioning as a result of his employment of experimental reasoning. In one instance Hume appears to want to discuss belief in mechanistic fashion as an adjunct of the faculty of memory. In this regard he draws on his own contention that the faculty of memory is more reliable than the faculty of imagination. His words are:

> 'Tis evident at first sight, that the ideas of memory are much more lively and strong than those of the imagination, and that the former faculty paints its objects in more distinct colours than

any which are employed by the latter.[1]

Although the passage quoted above precedes his discussion of causality in the Treatise, it is possible to see in his later discussion of that doctrine how this estimate of the precedence of memory over imagination is confirmed. The memory of repeated events appears to have a much more decisive influence upon the mind than does the influence of events merely imagined.

Hume suggests that the persuasiveness which seems to attach itself to our beliefs thus seems to be related to the force of this faculty of memory.

> Thus it appear, that the belief or assent, which always attends the memory and the sense, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present; and that this alone distinguishes them from the imagination.[2]

Hume's point here is that it is the faculty of memory which gives credence to our senses. In contrast to the workings of imagination, this latter faculty does not allow us to believe in its productions. Thus it is the faculty of memory, alone, which allows us to distinguish, with such reliability between mere imaginings and reliable beliefs.

But Hume also realized the futility of attempting to explain belief in terms of some mechanism operating in the human understanding. In the Appendix to the Treatise Hume confesses his inability and concludes that his

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[1] Tr., p. 9.

[2] Tr., p. 86.

"experimental" investigation can provide little more than a phenomenological description of the working of belief.

> An idea assented to feels different from a fictitious idea that the fancy alone presents to us; and this different feeling I endeavour to explain by calling it a superior force or vivacity, or solidity, or firmness, or steadiness.[1]

Hume confesses that this variety of terms may appear somewhat "unphilosophical," but his intention really is to describe a function which appears to be such a common factor of the human understanding that its working is really apparent to everyone.

Perhaps this last remark is the most significant aspect of his treatment of the doctrine. Hume apparently is attempting to explain the basis for the reliability of our beliefs by referring to their universal acceptance in common life. To be sure, such an appeal is made in a round-about fashion, but the words which were chosen to express this appeal reveal that it held considerable importance for Hume.

> I scarce find any word that fully answers the case, but am oblig'd to have recourse to every one's feeling in order to give him a perfect notion of this operation of the mind... I confess, that 'tis impossible to explain perfectly this feeling or manner of conception. We may make use of words that express something near it. But its true and proper name is belief, which is a term that every one sufficiently understands in common life.[2]

This appeal to common usage and understanding is reminiscent of the similar appeal which is made in attempting to explain the workings of our moral sense.[1] There Hume illustrates the way in which the universal evidence of morality indicates a kind of natural balance between the individual passions of self-interest and the social conventions established by education. Though the necessity which thus attaches to our moral judgements is "artificial," it is no less natural. It seem clear that something approximating this appeal to the reliability of nature is also present in the discussion of belief. Here Hume omits any mention of the necessity of nature, as well he should. Beliefs are not knowledge and thus can never be regarded as necessary. But in my estimate, his reference to their common acceptance is indicative of his own conclusion, arrived at after considerable empirical investigation, that our beliefs are worthy of the faith which we repose in them. It should be remembered that Hume regarded common sense as a much more reliable guide than did many of his philosophical predecessors. Take for example his stringent criticism of the philosophical theory of perception for its failure to provide any real advance upon the theory which was widely accepted by the common man.[2] In the Inquiry this suggestion of the reliability of common sense reasoning is expressed in terms of his remarks about custom.

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[1] Tr., p. 629. [2] Tr., p. 629.

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[1] See above, Section 2, b.

[2] See below, Chap. 5, Section 3, b, (2).

> Custom, then, is the great guide of human life. It is that principle alone which renders our experience useful to us and makes us expect, for the future, a similar train of events with those which have appeared in the past. Without the influence of custom we should be entirely ignorant of every matter of fact beyond what is immediately present to the memory and sense. We should never know how to adjust means to ends or to employ our natural powers in the production of any effect. There would be an end at once of all action as well as of the chief part of speculation.[1]

Thus, there appear to be good reasons for suggesting that in making this appeal to common acceptance and understanding Hume was attempting to explain the simple factor which produces belief by suggesting that since belief is universal it must originate in some natural propensity or principle within the human mind. Of course such a principle defies final and exhaustive explanation but that can only be taken as testimony of its ultimate importance.

Of course such a conclusion exceeds the limits established by a narrowly sensationalist interpretation of the "purple peroration," but as we have already seen such transgressions to insist upon their importance, as we have indicated above, misses the major thrust of Hume's naturalism. The fact that belief is explained by such a naturalistic appeal, and furthermore, the fact that this notion plays such a profound role in all of Hume's philosophy should give anyone pause when he suggests that Hume is presenting only a positivist or strict sensationalist account of the workings of the human mind.

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[1] Inq., p. 58.

d. The doctrine of space and time

One of the factors which is too often ignored in interpreting Hume is that much of what he wrote was stated in critical, indeed polemical, fashion because Hume sought to mark out a new direction in philosophy. It is little wonder that Hume's contemporaries reacted more vigorously to his critical rather than to his constructive impulses. It is somewhat less remarkable that succeeding generations of philosophers have taken over this same response.

This discussion of the origin of our notions of space and time is shaped fundamentally by Hume's critical impulses, although the constructive side is there too,[1] as we shall see but it is less explicit than in the preceding discussions of the moral sense and causality. Hume's treatment of space and time is discussed in terms of his disagreement with those philosophers of his day who sought to argue for the infinite divisibility of space and time. This was an issue which concerned both philosophers and mathematicians since the latter argued that mathematical points were infinitely divisible as well. Hume apparently disavowed such notions because his empirical observations would not allow him to accept the existence of space and time which are infinitely divisible.

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[1] Kemp Smith persuasively argues, (op. cit., p. 280f.) that Hume's own constructive doctrine of space and time was influenced by Francis Hutcheson's similar doctrine that our ideas of space and time, like those of morality, do not originate as a result of the influence of reason, but take their origin from some influence of nature which precedes reason.

Hume's doctrine of space and time appears in two parts, both directed at this dominant philosophical opinion that extension and duration are infinitely divisible. The first part represents Hume's employment of "abstract" reason. It consists of a four-step argument against infinite divisibility which proceeds as follows:

1. The mind is not capable of conceiving infinity because of its natural limitations.
2. No idea of extension or duration can be infinite, but must be finite containing a finite number of simple and indivisible parts.
3. It is possible for space and time to exist in conformity with this idea.
4. If it be possible they must conform, since their infinite divisibility is both impossible and contradictory.[1]

The argument itself is supported by at least one underlying premise and two auxiliary arguments. The underlying premise precedes the third and fourth steps and is significant because it shows what might be considered an earlier stage of development in Hume's views regarding perception. This premise occurs in two forms. The weaker form might be considered an antecedent of the ontological argument; it appears in the form of Hume's support of the metaphysical maxim, "that nothing that we imagine is absolutely impossible."[2] The stronger formulation is the surprising one because here Hume attempts to demonstrate that ideas are adequate representations of objects and that, "whatever appears impossible or contradictory upon the comparison of these ideas must be really impossible and contradictory."[1] This premise was, no doubt, included with the intention of constructing an empirically grounded alternative to infinite divisibility. Hume has done that much but in the process, as we shall see later, he has landed himself in a rather sizable dilemma.

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[1] Tr., p. 39.

[2] Tr., p. 32.

This fact is further documented by the two supporting arguments which also underlie this four-part attack upon the origin of the idea of extension as a compound idea. Hume suggests that when one takes the most minute idea which can be formed of a portion of extension and then repeats this idea as many times as one desires, he discovers that the compound idea of extension arises from this repetition. Hume further maintains that if one were to carry on this repetition ad infinitum he would discover that this idea of extension also would become infinite. Therefore the idea of an infinite number of parts is identical with the idea of an infinite extension. Thus no finite extension is capable of containing an infinite number of parts, and a corollary, no finite extension is infinitely divisible.[2]

This tracing of the idea of extension from repetition is joined by an additional argument. It is Hume's contention that existence cannot be applied to compound ideas, taken by themselves. Instead it can be attributed only to particular existents and then can be applied derivatively to compound notions like number or extension which are composed of individual existents. However if number of extension are to exist their individual parts must be recognized as existents in some sense also. If these individual parts are regarded as infinitely divisible this is impossible since infinite divisibility denies the possibility of a minimum sense datum which could be said to exist and thus when taken in this form the whole notion of extension must be regarded as non-existent.[1] In other words, if extension, and in parallel fashion duration, have no specifiable and indivisible particulars they can have no existence.

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[1] Tr., p. 29.   [2] Tr., p. 30.

Thus Hume's argument against infinite divisibility might be seen to proceed as follows when the underlying premises and supporting arguments are combined.

1. The mind is not capable of conceiving infinity because of its natural limitations. (by appeal to human experience)
2. No idea of extension or duration can be infinite, but must be finite containing a finite number of simple and indivisible parts. (by appeal to #1)
3. It is possible for space and time to exist in conformity with this idea. (by appeal to the maxim that what we imagine is possible)
4. If it is possible they must conform, since their infinite divisibility is both impossible and contradictory. (by appeal to the stronger formulation that whatever appears impossible or contradictory really is such, and by appeal to the supporting arguments (a) that no finite extension can contain an infinite number of parts and thus no finite extension can be infinitely divisible, and (b) that if extension is a compound idea it is impossible for it to exist unless it is composed of indivisible parts.)

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[1] Tr., p. 30f.

The second part of Hume's philosophy regarding space and time is a consequence of the first and might be seen as a further adumbration of 4b. It represents Hume's employment of "experimental reason." Stated succinctly it is that space and time are not derived from separate and distinct ideas themselves but arise solely from the "manner" or "order" in which objects exist.[1] Treated more exhaustively, the idea of space proceeds, says Hume, from impressions of atoms endowed with color and solidity, referred to as colored points. And this color and solidity are necessary both for objects to be perceived and also for the imagination to conceive them as copies.[2] However, Hume qualifies this assertion with the statement that the idea of space does not arise so much from an impression of these colored points themselves as it does from observing their "disposition" or "manner of arrangement."[3] So the idea of space is not a copy of a specific impression of colored points. Instead it is a unique idea composed of certain impressions of observations of the placement or arrangements of these colored points. Hume does not use the term, "impression," here to describe the antecedents of these ideas of manner or arrangement; thus one is somewhat at a loss to know how to describe these ideas and remain consistent with his doctrine concerning the origin of our ideas. In like manner the idea of time is related to the impressions derived from observing the succession which takes place in changing objects. However the idea does not copy an impression of succession but arises from an observation of the "manner" in which objects in succession present themselves.[1]

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[1] Tr., p. 39.

[2] Tr., p. 38.

[3] Tr., p. 34.

Thus ideas of space and time have this characteristic in common, that they are not copies of impressions which have any extensity or duration about them. Instead they are derived from impressions only secondarily by virtue of the observations which are made of the manner in which impressions of color, solidity, or succession present themselves. If one were required to define space and time for Hume he would have to say something to the effect that the essential characteristic of space is a type of sense datum or atom endowed with color and solidity which one observes and whose behavior leads one to conclude that extension is existent. In the same manner, time might be defined as the result of observing the pattern of certain impressions which are received from a succession of changing objects. Color, solidity, and changing objects are essential to these definitions but the ideas of space and time are not copied from impressions of these elements. Thus space and time are notions derived from experience, but it is experience observed and interpreted, rather than experience recorded and originating ideas.

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[1] Tr., p. 36.

This second part of the doctrine really confirms what is only implicit in the first part, namely, that Hume's doctrine of space and time is really a non-sensational doctrine. It is also a doctrine in which Hume exhibits a good deal of confusion about his intentions. One obvious element of confusion is generated by his imprecise terminology. In one instance he terms the colored points mathematical, but later on he calls the notion of mathematical points absurd. Kemp Smith suggests that Hume really meant to say physical points here and he cites a passage in the *Inquiry* where Hume makes use of this terminology.[1]

> Whatever disputes there may be about mathematical points, we must allow that there are physical points, that is, parts of extension, which cannot be divided or lessened, either by the eye or imagination.[2]

With Kemp Smith's clarification we are able to understand with greater clarity Hume's disagreement with geometry. One possible reason for this confusion was that Hume was attempting to tackle the geometers on their own ground. It was his contention that though the demonstrations of mathematics (he was really speaking about geometry here), are opposed to finite divisibility, the definitions (or pure mathematics), really support this position. Hume's contention is that the definitions of such terms as point, line, surface, etc. must be regarded by mathematicians as indivisible, since if they were not they could not be considered limiting notions and would serve no purpose whatsoever.[1] He also demonstrates the imprecision of certain essential notions in geometry such as equality, inequality, curve, etc. He maintains that these notions are derived from observation and corrected by intuition and thus cannot have sufficient authority to support the case for infinite divisibility.[2] It is in such a way that Hume appears to carry the day with the mathematicians and to demonstrate his disregard for geometry.

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[1] N. Kemp Smith, *The Philosophy of David Hume*, p. 286.

[2] Inq., p. 182.

In sum, Hume maintains that space and time cannot be considered infinitely divisible but are compound ideas composed of peculiar components which are indivisible and related impressions of color and succession but do not follow directly from impressions of extensity or duration. The confusion generated by this system is patent. The primary difficulty seems to surround the ambiguous manner in which Hume chooses to provide some empirical grounding for the ideas of space and time. A closer look at some of the passages alluded to above will shed some light on the inconsistencies within the doctrine itself. Hume begins in a radically empirical fashion by tracing the origin of the compound idea of extension.

I first take the least idea I can form of a part

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[1] Tr., p. 44.

[2] Tr., p. 52.

> of extension, and being certain that there is nothing more minute than this idea, I conclude, that whatever I discover by its means must be a real quality of extension. I then repeat this idea once, twice, thrice, and etc. and find the compound idea of extension arising from its repetition.[1]

One clear implication of this passage is that extension is a complex idea composed of simple ideas which are indivisible each of which contains some quality of extensity about it. Such an implication seems to follow from his insistence, in the passage dealing with the origin of ideas, on the necessary correlation between impressions and ideas. To exclude this implication would lead one to conclude that the idea of extension is not a copy of an impression but presents a new element altogether. Of course, Hume does not follow this latter conclusion; however, neither does he follow what seems to be the clear implication of the passage. Instead he insists:

> The parts, into which the ideas of space and time resolve themselves, become at last indivisible; and these indivisible parts, *being nothing in themselves are inconceivable when not filled with something real and existent*. The ideas of space and time are therefore no separate or distinct ideas but merely those of the manner or order in which objects exist.[2]

Such a contention might pass if Hume were more explicit about what these ideas of manner or order are and whether they in fact might be said to correspond to impressions which have extensity or duration. He implies that this is a possibility with regard to space at least when he suggests that one can form an abstract idea of an extended body by extrapolating the colored elements and reflecting only on this idea of their disposition or manner of appearance.

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[1] Tr., p. 29.

[2] Tr., p. 39 (Italics mine).

> finding a resemblance in the disposition of colour'd points, of which they are compos'd we omit the peculiarities of colour, as far as possible, and found an abstract idea merely on that disposition of points or manner of appearance, in which they agree.[1]

Taken at a glance, Hume's predicament might be described as follows: Extension and duration are compound ideas. Compound ideas are not existent in themselves but must be composed of simple ideas which are indivisible and thus existent. But it is impossible to cite simple ideas which originate from impressions of extensity and duration. Thus, according to Hume, these simple ideas must originate as a result of the influence of the observation of the "manner" in which natural objects behave. Hence, in the last analysis, the ideas of space and time are finally dependent upon the human mind and its capacities to observe and interpret natural behavior.[2]

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[1] Tr., p. 34.

[2] The question as to whether this constitutes psychologism, contrary to Aschenbrenner's claim noted above, can be handled in much the same manner here. Hume's logical analysis of the impossibility of infinite divisibility allows him to take the critical position he is desirous of taking. Infinite divisibility is clearly impossible on logical grounds. It is only when he is required to state a constructive alternative that he speaks in psychological terms. But this is clearly a different type of investigation than the logical one.

XUM

As is the case with causality, and the moral sense, Hume appears to be offering an appeal to convention here. Although such an appeal is disguised by his discussion of "manner" or "disposition" of the colored points, it seems clear that in the last analysis it is the functioning of these conventions or, perhaps more precisely, expectations, which allows him to attribute existence to the ideas of space and time.

Although it would be unfair to make too much of his discussion of "manner" as yet another instance of his appeal to the natural influence of our mental conventions, I think it can be safely argued that his cryptically brief discussion of this factor is yet another instance of Hume's expression of faith in the natural balance which exists between the functioning of the mind and the uniformity of nature. In short, Hume's insistence that it is this non-sensationalist phenomena of the "manner" or arrangement of colored points which originates our impressions of space and time, once more indicates the way in which he exceeds the limits of a narrowly sensationalist interpretation of the "purple peroration."

3. Conclusions

Throughout the whole preceding discussion it is possible to raise the question of whether Hume is guilty of inconsistency, or in some sense, has failed to complete his program in terms of his intention to present a type of

Newtonian analysis of the simple factors which underlie our behavior in making moral judgements, in inferring the causal connection, and in reposing confidence in the influence of our beliefs. In every instance Hume is constrained to appeal to the influence of natural instincts, or to the uniformity of nature which, in some finally inexplicable fashion, renders our experience coherent. Nowhere is this presumed inconsistency more apparent than in the discussion of the basis for our impressions of space and time. At the outset of this chapter, we took issue with A. G. N. Flew's estimate that it is this element in Hume which would render both the Treatise and the Inquiry unacceptable, according to a strict sensationalist interpretation of Hume's "purple peroration."

Norman Kemp Smith provides further confirmation of the inaccuracy of Flew's judgement in his discussion of this apparent inconsistency in Hume. In particular Kemp Smith cites a similar charge against Hume raised by one of Hume's contemporaries, James Beattie.[1] Beattie cites as contradictory the well-known passage in the Treatise in which Hume confesses his gratitude for the entertainments of polite society which rescue him from the sceptical melancholy to which his philosophizing has led him.

I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse,

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[1] Norman Kemp Smith, op. cit., p. 544.

> and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hours' amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther.[1]

Beattie contends that this passage indicates a fundamental contradiction between Hume's sceptical philosophy and his practice. Kemp Smith correctly argues that this charge is an instance of the Humian misunderstanding. For Hume was aware of the difficulties present in his position and he took some pains to defend himself against such charges.

> My practice, you say, refutes my doubts. But you mistake the purport of my question. As an agent, I am quite satisfied in the point; but as a philosopher who has some share of curiosity, I will not say scepticism, I want to learn the foundation of this inference.[2]

Hume's argument is that the whole intention of his study is to demonstrate that "it is not reasoning which engages us to suppose the past resembling the future,"[3] but the very influence which Beattie condemns as unphilosophical, the influence of feelings or passions which are encountered in the course of everyday experience. Hume's whole emphasis upon his "new scene of thought" was calculated to overturn this reliance upon reason itself as the remedy to scepticism.

However, that is not to say that there are no difficulties present in Hume's program. There are some profound problems present in Hume's naturalistic appeal. In

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[1] Tr., p. 269.

[2] Inq., p. 52.

[3] Inq., p. 53.

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particular Kemp Smith argues[1] that Hume's failure to thoroughly analyze the fundamental components of this naturalistic feeling perpetuates a profound confusion in his argument. The fact that Hume can rest his case upon a repeated appeal to feeling, or sentiment, or belief, terms which are used interchangeably, and as we saw particularly with regard to belief, not always consistently, indicates that Hume was incapable of stating in precise fashion just what it is that originates this naturalism.

This difficulty may be stated in another way in terms of Hume's failure to successfully complete the Newtonian intention with which he began, the intention of analyzing the fundamental components of the "vulgar consciousness," with a view to establishing the explanation of the simple factors which underlie our everyday behavior. It should be said in Hume's defense, that he was not unaware of this difficulty. In the section of the _Inquiry_ devoted to "doubts concerning the understanding," Hume confesses his confusion about his ability to ever complete a Newtonian analysis of human nature.

> These ultimate springs and principles are totally shut up from human curiosity and inquiry. Elasticity, gravity, cohesion of parts, communication of motions by impulse - these are probably the ultimate in causes and principles which we shall ever discover in nature; and we may esteem ourselves sufficiently happy if, by accurate inquiry and reasoning, we can trace up the particular phenomena to, or near to, these general principles. _The most perfect philosophy_

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[1] Norman Kemp Smith, _op. cit_., p. 548.

> of the natural kind only staves off our ignorance a little longer, as perhaps the most perfect philosophy of the moral or metaphysical kind serves only to discover larger portions of it. Thus the observation of human blindness and weakness is the result of all philosophy, and meets us at every turn, in spite of our endeavors to elude or avoid it.[1]

In brief, Hume is confident about the correctness of natural philosophy but he is also painfully aware of the shortcomings of human understanding; thus he resigns himself to an approximate statement of the natural principles and enjoins others to be aware of the limits of human understanding. Clearly, the "purple peroration" must be seen in this same context. It is yet another statement of this Humian notion that philosophers need to be continually reminded of the limits of human understanding and of the dangers inherent in giving way to a type of presumptuous curiosity which frequently produces imaginative explanations of human behavior not adequately grounded upon observable factors present in human experience.

Hume, himself, is not entirely free of the difficulties engendered by such an unrestrained curiosity. For example, it is possible to see in his discussion of belief how this desire to explain the workings of belief strains the limits of human understanding. Kemp Smith argues, persuasively,[2] that Hume demonstrates this difficulty when he contends, on the one hand, that belief is nothing more than a feeling of lively impressions, without any cognitive character, while on the other he argues that belief is an act of mind which involves the formation of opinion, or the assent to a particular type of common sense reasoning. In the moral and aesthetic spheres this understanding of the influence of belief actually issues in the notion that judgements are founded upon such apparently non-cognitive feelings.

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[1] Inq., p. 45 (Italics mine).

[2] Norman Kemp Smith, op. cit., p. 549.

If there is any fundamental sense in which Hume's program may be considered inadequate or incomplete it must reside in this failure on Hume's part to develop a consistent position regarding the cognitive nature of the feelings. For if belief is not knowledge, or even a surrogate for it, then it is not possible to argue, on the naturalistic grounds which Hume presents, that we can make cognitive judgements solely on the basis of our feelings. Hume needs to demonstrate more precisely what the relation between cognition and feeling is. To contend that reason is subordinate to the passions and to appeal to the uniformity of nature, or to the natural coherence of our common sense is only the first step in such a direction.

And it is in this sense, specifically, that Whitehead may be understood as further explicating this naturalistic point in Hume. Whitehead, himself, seems to evidence his awareness of this continuity between himself and Hume in the fourth section of his chapter in Process and Reality entitled,

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"From Descartes to Kant."[1] His formulation of the "metaphysical rule of evidence" appears to state clearly the same intention as Hume to remain true to common sense. But his employment of that rule represents a new departure from Hume.

> For subsequent empiricists the pleasure of the dogma has overcome the metaphysical rule of evidence: *that we must bow to those presumptions which, in despite of criticism we still employ for the regulation of our lives*. Such presumptions are imperative in experience. *Rationalism is the search for the coherence of such presumptions*.[2]

Certainly Hume would have given ready assent to Whitehead's "metaphysical rule"; it is doubtful however that he would have been willing to subscribe to Whitehead's latter statement concerning the role of rationalism. Hume regarded himself as an opponent of rationalism in all of its forms. Kemp Smith argues[3] that Hume regarded the errors which are propounded by the rationalistic dogmatists as always more dangerous that those which are presented by the sceptics. And it is this analysis of rationalism which leads Hume to identify himself, though only in a limited sense, with the sceptics rather than the rationalists.

Unfortunately, Hume was prevented from understanding in what sense it is possible to be a rationalist without being a dogmatist. Thus it is this factor, more than any other in my estimate, which prevented Hume from discussing his naturalism with the type of precision which it demands. In contrast, it is precisely Whitehead's attempt to provide such a naturalistic, yet non-dogmatic, form of rationalism which must be regarded as his advance upon Hume as well as the unique contribution of his philosophy. For it is only when such a type of rationalism is employed that it becomes possible to present the kind of "cosmology of feelings" which is demanded to make Hume's naturalism more complete. Apparently Whitehead had some partial understanding of the sense in which his rationalism was a true completion of Hume's program, for he remarks: "From the point of view of the philosophy of organism, the credit must be given to Hume that he emphasized the 'process' inherent in the fact of being a mind."[1] Whitehead's point is that Hume was correct, for example, in his discussion of causality in attempting to trace the necessary connection between causes and effects and the process of inference which underlies this connection. Whitehead argues, however, that Hume's analysis is incomplete because, like Kant, he assumed that necessity resides only in the mind. Whitehead's words are: "...he misconceived his problem to be the analysis of mental operations. He should have conceived it as the analysis of operations constituent of actual entities."[2]

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[1] P.R., p. 229f.

[2] *Ibid*. (Italies mine)

[3] Norman Kemp Smith, *op. cit*., p. 546.

It is here that Whitehead's incomplete grasp of Hume appears. For while it is clear that Hume does regard necessity as something which resides in the mind rather than in objects, that is only part of the story. Whitehead also needs to be reminded that Hume denied that there was any distinction between "physical and moral necessity," and in Hume's own statement that necessity is a mental or subjective factor, he also argues that this must be the case because of the uniformity of nature, and because of the apparent compatibility between human habits and conventions and the laws of nature, as evidenced particularly in his discussion of the moral sense. And it is precisely in this latter appeal that Hume transcends the limits of a narrow sensationalism. But we shall see how Hume could be said to reply more specifically to the charges which Whitehead raises against such sensationalism in the next chapter.

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[1] P.R., p. 229. [2] *Ibid*.

Chapter Four -- A Reappraisal of the Whiteheadian Critique of Hume's Sensationalism

Thus far the thrust of this study has been directed at a reconsideration of the traditional, sensationalist interpretation of Humian philosophy. We have demonstrated with regard to the historical origin of this interpretation that much of what has been passed off as authoritative interpretation had its origin in the minds of figures who were more moved by cant and prejudice than they were by a genuine concern for the truth. Furthermore, it has also been demonstrated how this traditional understanding can also be overturned by an examination of some eminently non-sensationalist doctrines in Hume. While these conclusions are perhaps interesting, they are not really novel, having been presaged to a large degree by Norman Kemp Smith and J. A. Passmore. They have been included here as a means of preparing the way for the real point of this study, namely, a reconsideration of how this new understanding cannot help but modify Whitehead's contention that Hume is essentially a sensationalist and furthermore that such sensationalism places Humian philosophy in direct conflict with Whiteheadian metaphysics. This chapter will proceed therefore, with a brief synopsis of the Whiteheadian critique. Then a response to that criticism will be attempted on behalf of Hume.

1. The Whiteheadian Critique Examined

At the outset of this dissertation we enumerated several criticisms of Hume which illustrate a fundamental misunderstanding of Hume's contribution to the history of philosophy. While such criticisms serve as a challenge to Humian scholars, they are not difficult to counter, because they ignore some fundamental notions in Hume, specifically the Humian emphasis upon belief and feeling. However the Whiteheadian misunderstanding is not so easily countered because there are instances in which Whitehead appears to understand the novel character of Hume's employment of sensationalism as a means of demonstrating its own limits. There are also clear indications that Whitehead regarded Hume in terms of the conventional stereotype as well. In spite of this ambiguity in Whitehead, it does seem possible to conclude that the more dominant attitude in his philosophy is that one which views Hume essentially as a sceptical sensationalist. It seems clear that the most significant portion of Whitehead's understanding of Hume was formed in reaction to Hume's sensationalism. In the preface to Process and Reality, Whitehead remarks that one of the "prevalent habits of thought" which the philosophy of organism repudiates is "the sensationalist doctrine of perception."[1] In Whitehead's mind, as we indicated in Chapter

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[1] P.R., p. viii.

One, Hume's philosophy was the paradigmatic statement of such a sensationalist epistemology.

The central error which Whitehead perceives in Hume is the sensationalist assumption that sense data are more fundamental than other elements in experience, specifically the emotions. Such an epistemology wrongly assumes, says Whitehead, "that the search for data is to be narrowed to the question, 'what data are directly provided by the activity of the sense organs---preferably the eyes?'"[1] It is this dogma which, Whitehead contends, "culminates in the eighteenth century with Hume's Treatise,"[2] which is to be denied because it regards everything but sensa as derivative.

> The other factors in experience are therefore to be construed as derivative, in the sense of owing their origin to these sensa. Emotions, aspirations, hopes, fears, love and hate, intentions, and recollections are merely concerned with sensa. Apart from sensa, they would be non-existent. This is the doctrine which is being denied.[3]

Stated in positive fashion, Whitehead seeks to separate himself from Hume because he feels that Hume's sensationalist epistemology reverses the order of our understanding. Thus Whitehead insists, "This doctrine (the philosophy of organism) exactly inverts Hume's point of view and the variant points of view derived from his doctrines."[4] Specifically, this must be the case says Whitehead, because it is the emotional or sensitive side of human experience which communicates the fundamental insight that it is the sense of "power" which is the basis for our notion of "substance." Whitehead contends: "Our experience starts with a sense of power, and proceeds to the discrimination of individualities and their qualities."[1] And this tenent of the philosophy of organism constitutes a reversal of Hume, says Whitehead, because "Hume makes the qualifications primary; and the world is introduced as a secondary conjecture."[2]

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[1] A.I., p. 226.

[2] M.T., p. 152.

[3] Ibid. (Italics mine)

[4] M.T., p. 162.

In brief, Whitehead finds Hume's sensationalism inadequate because it appears to contradict the fundamental theme of the philosophy of organism; "Civilization involves the understanding of the given world in respect of its qualifications."[3] Because Hume overlooks the "giveness" of the world in his search for sense data, specifically, Whitehead contends, by ignoring the influence of emotional experience, his philosophy must be inverted.

This is the major theme which underlies all Whitehead's criticisms of Hume. However these criticisms appear in several forms, and while this attack upon sensationalism is primary in all of them, it appears in at least three different ways. In the first Whiteheadian criticism which we will discuss, Whitehead contends that the sensationalist emphasis of Hume and Newton left natural philosophy without any notions of order or purpose and thus nature was robbed of its integrity. The second critique discussed here constitutes a Whiteheadian attack upon the sensationalist methodology which assumes that sense data, collected by means of the method of conscious introspection, are an exhaustive resource for the examination of human experience. The third charge provides us with some understanding of why Whitehead so fundamentally misunderstood Hume for it deals with Hume's neglect of the discussion of power. Specifically Whitehead chastises Hume by illustrating how Locke's discussion of power is a more adequate account of human experience than Hume's preoccupation with sense data. Thus, while these three criticisms deal with different dimensions of Hume, it does seem possible to trace this consistent theme throughout all of them which regards Hume as inadequate because he fails to recognize the significance of the emotional as well as the importance of the sensory. But let us examine these individual criticisms in more detail.

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

The first critique examined here appears in the seventh lecture of Modes of Thought, entitled, "Nature Lifeless."[1] There Whitehead remarks about his quarrel with modern epistemology for its exclusive stress upon sense-perception for the provision of data respecting nature. He suggests that Hume's philosophy must be regarded as the basis for this fundamental tenent of modern epistemology. But it is also in Hume's Treatise that the fundamental discovery is made which demonstrates that pure sense-perception does not provide data for its own interpretation. Whitehead maintains that this latter conclusion "was the great discovery embodied in Hume's philosophy. This discovery is the reason why Hume's Treatise will remain as the irrefutable basis for all subsequent philosophic thought."[1] Apparently the profundity of Hume's discovery was overlooked, largely, says Whitehead, because of the success of the Newtonian method in physics. Whitehead contends that Newton's law of gravitation "greatly increased the systematic aspect of nature," because it did away with the confused discussion of transformation of natural philosophy since the time of Aristotle. However, this emphasis upon the discussion of laws and principles also had some disastrous consequences, in Whitehead's view. For it left nature dead, devoid of any reason or values which could provide an understanding of the integrity of nature.

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[1] M.T., p. 173f.

> Thus for Newtonians, Nature yielded no reasons: it could yield no reasons. Combining Newton and Hume we obtain a barren concept, namely a field of perception devoid of any data for its own interpretation, and a system of interpretation, devoid of any reason for the concurrence of its factors. It is this situation that modern philosophy from Kant onwards has in its various ways sought to render intelligible. My

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[1] M.T., p. 182.

> own belief is that this situation is a reductio ad absurdum, and should not be accepted as the basis for philosophic speculation.[1]

Whitehead remarks that his intention is to show how both Hume's and Newton's contributions are "gravely defective." He admits that they are right as far as they go. "But they omit those aspects of the Universe as experienced, and of our modes of experiencing, which jointly lead to the more penetrating ways of understanding."[2] We have already indicated Hume's affinity for certain tenents of Newtonianism. It is correct that Hume, in both the Treatise and the Inquiry undertakes an investigation of the principles and laws of the human understanding, which if those Newtonian limits were not transcended, would have yielded a human nature devoid of both reason and value. And if one regards Hume strictly from that Newtonian perspective such a conclusion is inescapable. But we have also seen in the preceding discussion how Hume oversteps the limits of Newton, how he regards himself as a "friend of virtue," and how he attempts to demonstrate that the old notion of the relationship between nature and reason must be replaced by a new understanding of the connection between nature and feeling. Those facts must certainly be regarded as an indication of the need to modify Whitehead's conclusion that Hume's contribution is "gravely defective" because it "omits modes of experiencing which can lead to the more penetrating ways of understanding." The nature of this modification of Whitehead's conclusion was prefigured in our reassessment of Hume's sensationalism, but perhaps this modification will appear with greater clarity after examining Whitehead's account of the errors of Hume's sensationalism.

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[1] M.T., p. 184. (Interestingly Whitehead goes on to remark that Kant's direction must be regarded as suspect since he accepts the Hume-Newton situation as normative and merely attempts to render it intelligible.)

[2] M.T., p. 185.

The second critique of Hume's sensationalism appears in the chapter entitled "Philosophic Method" in Adventures of Ideas. There Whitehead takes some pains to demonstrate his notion that, "a great deal of confused philosophical thought has its origin in obliviousness to the fact that the relevance of evidence is dictated by theory."[1] He remarks that the history of philosophy seems to demonstrate a pendulum movement between two fallacious opinions regarding the relevance of method to data.[2] The first fallacy Whitehead terms the "dogmatic fallacy" and he suggests it is evident amongst those philosophies which hold that "the principles of their working hypotheses are clear, obvious, and irreformable."[3] The second fallacy is formed in reaction to the first and consists in denying that one intends to uphold any system at all. Whitehead contends that when philosophers take such a posture, "they are then prey to the delusive clarities of detached expressions which it is the very purpose of their science to surmount."[1]

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[1] A.I., p. 222.

[2] Ibid.

[3] A.I., p. 222.

The fallacy which both of these positions ignore is that data themselves, devoid of a theory of interpretation, are silent. Both theories seem to assume that experience is intelligible on its own grounds without having to provide some explanation of the grounds upon which that intelligibility rests. But such a posture fails to take account of the fact that to ask experience for data is to become involved in a quest for information "which transcends the act of experience which is the occasion of asking."[2] Whitehead remarks that Hume gave some minimal recognition to this deeper dimension of experience in his continual movement from the question, "What do we experience?" to the question "What can we experience?". Says Whitehead, "Hume makes the transition, time and again, without explicit comment."[3] One is left to conjecture about what Whitehead's estimate of Hume would have been if he had made more explicit comments about this transition. However, in the end, Whitehead seems to conclude that the profundity of this transition was lost to Hume for he regards him finally as a proponent of the dogmatic fallacy because of his "strained attention to the patterns of sensa provided by the sense organs."[4]

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[1] A.I., p. 224

[2] A.I., p. 225.

[3] A.I., p. 225.

[4] A.I., p. 225.

This is the sensationalist dogmatism, says Whitehead, and as such it falls prey to two fundamental errors.

The first error revolves around a notion of the limitations of sense perception.

> The first error is the assumption of a few definite avenues of communication with the external world, the five sense-organs. This leads to the presupposition that the search for data is to be narrowed to the question, 'what data are directly provided by the activity of the sense-organs -- preferably the eyes?'[1]

Whitehead contends that such an assumption fails to take account of the fact that the "living organ of experience is the living body as a whole." To mistake this fact is to put undue reliance upon the brain as the organ of perception and to fail to recognize the dual impossibility of separating the brain from the body and of separating the body itself from the rest of the natural world. The second error is really a corollary of the first. It consists in presupposing "that the sole way of examining experience is by acts of conscious introspective analysis."[2] Whitehead remarks that psychology has already demonstrated the errors of such a procedure. Such a method is discredited because

> It lifts the clear-cut data of sensation into primacy, and cloaks the vague compulsions and derivations which form the main stuff of experience. In particular it rules out that intimate sense of derivation from the body, which is the reason for our instinctive identification of our bodies with ourselves.[3]

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[1] A.I., p. 226.

[2] A.I., p. 226.

[3] A.I., p. 227.

Whitehead elaborates on this charge by suggesting that such preoccupation with conscious introspection has the consequence of contracting the limits of the experiential world. He contends that the "mainstuff of experience" often fails to make itself evident across the threshold of consciousness. In particular there are important data which lie within the realm of drowsiness or insobriety, or religious awareness, experience dominated by emotion which would be ignored if only the data of conscious introspection were examined. He acknowledges that such dimensions of experience are difficult to interrogate but suggests that their presence is frequently felt and their influence retained in the phenomena of language and the behavioral conventions and practices which underlie it. He concludes:

> Thus an appeal to literature, to common language, to common practice, at once carries us away from the narrow basis provided by the sense data disclosed in direct introspection.[1]

Such an appeal to common language and common practice was nothing new to Hume, as should be evident from our foregoing discussion. And we shall make much of this appeal of Whitehead's later when we examine the possible Humian responses to his critique. However, for the present, it is clear that Whitehead demonstrates a certain lack of caution when he charges Hume with committing these two errors, of regarding sense data as the primary factors in experience, and of assuming that conscious introspection is the sole way of examining experience. For, while it is true that these are the errors which sensationalists make, according to Whitehead, it is not entirely clear that Hume made these errors consistently. Furthermore Whitehead, himself, appears to have recognized this fact. As we have previously indicated, Whitehead admitted that Hume's *Treatise* must be recognized as the "irrefutable basis for all subsequent philosophic thought"[1] precisely because Hume illustrates there that pure sense perception does not provide data for its own interpretation. In another place Whitehead makes a similar comment about Hume's apparent inconsistency in his application of a sensationalist methodology.

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[1] A.I., p. 229.

> Hume ...oversimplifies the problem by conceiving an initial bare occurrence of sense impressions devoid of essential relationship to other factors in experience. *In his subsequent argument he is apt fortunately to forget his explicit premises*. (That is he forgets his sensationalist premises.) So it is possible to construe his meaning in many ways. But in his controversy with antagonistic modes of thought, he judges them by the strict consequences of these premises.[2]

Certainly such vacillation on Hume's part concerning the fundamental importance of sense data flies in the face of sensationalism, and Whitehead seems to give Hume credit for that. Finally, we have seen how Whitehead suggests that the presence of the two questions, "What do we experience?" and "What can we experience?", alongside each other in Hume, though devoid of comment, must indicate that Hume had some grasp of the deeper levels of experience. All of these remarks indicate that at time Whitehead recognized that Hume could not be regarded as a sensationalist pure and simple. Why then are his remarks about Hume so polemical on other occasions?

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[1] M.T., p. 182.

[2] M.T., p. 168. (Italics mine)

Perhaps an answer to this question can be provided by an examination of the third important reference which Whitehead makes to Hume. In Process and Reality, Part III, Chapter I, Whitehead expresses his intention to show how the philosophy of organism "can claim for each of its main position the express authority of one, or the other, of some supreme master of thought."[1] He names Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant as those whom he regards as supreme masters, but in the discussion which follows perhaps greater emphasis is given to Plato and Locke than to any of the others. Perhaps that fact can be regarded as the single most important factor which determines Whitehead's attitude toward Hume. Whitehead makes this factor explicit in his discussion of Hume's indebtedness to Locke.

> Every philosophical school in the course of its history requires two presiding philosophers. One of them under the influence of the main doctrines of the school should survey experience with some adequacy but inconsistently. The other philosopher should reduce the doctrines of the school to a rigid consistency; he will thereby effect a reductio ad absurdum. No school of though has performed its full service to philosophy until these men have appeared.

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[1] P.R., p. 63.

> In this way the school of sensationalist empiricism derives its importance from Locke and Hume.[1]

These words reveal that Whitehead was one of those philosophers who regarded Hume essentially as the culmination of the direction first enunciated by Locke and Berkeley, a conclusion which this essay has attempted to attack head on. But Whitehead compounds the errors of such an interpretation by expressing his admiration for Locke's notion of "power." This is the notion which Whitehead refers to in his remark about Locke's "adequacy" which is lacking in sufficient consistency, quoted above. He contends that Hume's contribution is that he demonstrates that the Lockian notion of power is not compatible with a purely sensationalist philosophy. Then he makes one of his intriguing comments about Hume's sensationalism. "The establishment of such a philosophy, (sensationalism) though derivative from Locke, was not his explicit purpose."[2] Apparently Whitehead believed that Hume's purpose was merely to make consistent Locke's philosophy, which would mean that Hume was prevented by that same purpose from discussing the Lockian doctrine of power since it was incompatible with the limitations of sensationalism.

Evidently Whitehead did not consider the development of a sensationalist philosophy to be Hume's first concern. It was merely the reductio ad absurdum which was the result of making Locke adhere to canons of rigid consistency which

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[1] P.R., p. 89. [2] P.R., p. 89.

Hume apparently regarded as his primary purpose, according to Whitehead.

It would appear that there is considerable question about Whitehead's remarks here. First, we have already indicated the difficulty of seeing Hume as merely the logical culmination of Locke. And secondly, there is serious question about Whitehead's implied conclusion that Hume neglects the Lockian doctrine of "power." This second issue demands further discussion because if it can be demonstrated that Hume attempted a discussion of the notion of "power" then the sensationalist charge which Whitehead makes against him must be modified even more drastically. But first we must discover what Whitehead felt was significant about the Lockian doctrine of "power."

In this first chapter of Part II of Process and Reality, Whitehead takes some pains to demonstrate the congruity between Locke's doctrine of power and the philosophy of organism. He admits that Locke was not fully aware of the implications of his doctrine but concludes "it is a short step from a careless phrase to a flash of insight."[1] Specifically Whitehead feels that the Lockian doctrine is an important precedent because in his estimate Locke realized two significant things: First, that the problem of perception and the problem of power are the same problem, and secondly, that to discuss the problem of power is to

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[1] P.R., p. 93.

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recognize the necessity for a doctrine of relations. Whitehead maintains that the key passage in Locke is contained in these words.

> "This idea how got -- The mind being every day informed, by the senses, of the alteration of those simple ideas it observes in things without, and taking notice how one comes to an end and ceases to be, and another begins to exist, which was not before; reflecting also on what passes within itself, and observing a constant change of its ideas, sometimes by the impression of outward objects on the senses, and sometimes by the determination of its own choice; and concluding, from what it has so constantly observed to have been, that the like changes will for the future be made in the same thing by like agents, and by the like ways; considers in one thing the possibility of having any of its simple ideas changed, and in another the possibility of making that change; and so comes by that idea which we call "power." Thus we say, fire has a power to melt gold;...and gold has a power to be melted;... Power thus considered is twofold; viz. as able to make, or able to receive, any change: the one may be called "active," and the other "passive" power... I confess power includes in it some kind of relation,--- a relation to action or change; as, indeed which of our ideas, of what kind soever, when attentively considered, does not.[1]

In these few words Whitehead discovers a veritable goldmine for the philosophy of organism for he suggests that here Locke enunciates the main doctrines of his own philosophy. Among them are: the principle of relativity, the relational character of eternal objects, the ontological principle, and also the principle that the "power" of one actual entity on the other is simply how the former is objectified in the constitution of the other.[2] Specifically the Lockian doctrine has its analogue in the philosophy of organism's doctrine of the two types of objectification, causal objectification and presentational objectification. Whitehead's discussion of this relationship is too concise to be precise, but apparently the doctrine of causal objectification has its antecedent in Locke's notion of power as "active." Whitehead contends that in the phenomenon of causal objectification, "what is felt _subjectively_ by the objectified actual entity is transmitted _objectively_ to the concrescent actualities which supersede it."[1] It is in this sense that Locke is suggesting that power is "active" in that the "objectified actual entity is then exerting power," according to Whitehead. In reality Whitehead is also discussing the principle of relativity as well in his suggestion that Locke's notion of power as "active" is the antecedent of the doctrine of causal objectification. The assumption implicit here, and explicit as well if we understand Locke correctly, is that the notion of power as "active" requires that we recognize that all our ideas stand in some degree of relationship with one another.

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[1] John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, cited in P.R., p. 90.

[2] P.R., p. 91.

Thus the doctrine of presentational objectification has its analogue in Locke's notion of power as "passive." In reality presentational objectification is merely another way of describing the phenomenon of perception. Whitehead defines it as follows: "In presentational objectification the relational eternal objects fall into two sets, one set contributed by the "extensive" perspective of the perceived from the position of the perceiver, and the other set by the antecedent concrescent phases of the perceiver."[1] Whitehead doesn't address himself to the question of how such an understanding of the influence of the antecedent phases of the perceiver can be compatible with Locke's denial of the innateness of ideas. He makes no mention of this apart from his suggestion that Locke's doctrine of power is incompatible with his sensationalism. Apparently there were other incompatible notions in Locke too. Whitehead does remark that Locke is in error for overlooking the doctrine of internal relations. Without such a doctrine it is possible to attribute any change to any actual entity, which Whitehead contends is patently absurd.[2] But with this exception, Whitehead seems to perceive a considerable "flash of insight" in these "careless phrases" from Locke. In the main, Whitehead seems to feel that Locke was groping towards the central notion of the philosophy of organism that "the knowable is the complete nature of the knower, at least such phases of it as are antecedent to that operation of knowing."[3]

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[1] P.R., p. 91

It is difficult to understand how Whitehead can find all of these notions in Locke and at times one is tempted to suggest that he has given him more than the benefit of the doubt in this discussion.[1] But perhaps the more difficult issue is why Whitehead should attribute such notions to Locke while ignoring the possibility that Hume also had some concern for these issues in his discussion of the "force and vivacity" of our impressions and ideas? For if it can be demonstrated that there is in Hume something corresponding to Locke's notion of power then at the very least Whitehead's suggestion that Hume's essential contribution lies in his attempt to make consistent Locke's sensationalism must be seriously altered. At least that will be the direction which will be taken when we attempt to respond to Whitehead's critique on behalf of Hume.

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[1] P.R., p. 91.

[2] P.R., p. 92.

[3] P.R., p. 92.

In summary, this examination of Whitehead's charges against Hume appears to yield the following conclusions. In spite of his own admission that Hume appears to stray occasionally from a consistent employment of a sensationalist epistemology, Whitehead maintains constantly that Humian philosophy is in error because of its espousal of a sensationalist doctrine of perception. It is possible to see this Whiteheadian charge stated in at least three different forms. First, Whitehead condemns both Hume's

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[1] In a private conversation with Charles Hartshorne during the summer of 1971 concerning Whitehead's understanding of the history of philosophy, Hartshorne said that he felt that Whitehead was "charitable" toward both Locke and Descartes but that he probably took such an attitude because of Locke's "eminently British common sense."

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and Newton's contributions as "gravely defective" because of their omission of those elements of experience, beside sense data, which enable one to attribute purpose or rationality to the universe. Secondly, Whitehead criticizes a sensationalist epistemological method for its double preoccupation with sense data and with conscious introspection, which has the consequence of shadowing "the vague compulsions and derivations which form the main stuff of experience."[1] And finally, Whitehead criticizes Hume for his neglect of a doctrine of power which might allow one to attribute a sense of dynamism or relatedness to the universe. In contrast Locke's discussion of power is more adequate, even though it proves to be inconsistent with Locke's own sensationalism.

Although there is little explicit textual evidence to support such a conclusion, it does seem possible to infer the reason for Whitehead's misunderstanding of Hume from the juxtaposition of these two factors, (1) his aversion to sensationalism in any form, and (2) his admiration for Locke's notion of power. As we indicated at the outset of this chapter, the sensationalist doctrine of perception was one of the tenents of traditional philosophy which Whitehead set himself against. From the discussions which we have treated in his works it seems clear that he reacted more profoundly to this side of Hume than to any other. Thus, no doubt, he was prevented by his own preoccupation with this issue from understanding Hume in all of his complexity. When that predisposition is taken in conjunction with his profound admiration for Locke's discussion of power, it does seem possible to understand with some greater clarity why Whitehead could have misapprehended Hume so thoroughly, even when he openly acknowledged that there were profoundly non-sensationalist notions in his philosophy. Apparently Whitehead, like Hume,[1] was occasionally moved more deeply by critical rather than constructive motives. Thus he found it necessary to separate himself from Hume's sensationalism so thoroughly that he was prevented from recognizing certain congruities between himself and Hume. But perhaps this will become more apparent as we examine the possible Humian responses to this Whiteheadian critique.

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[1] A.I., p. 227.

2. Humian Responses to the Whiteheadian Critique

Essentially the Whiteheadian critique is double-pronged. First Whitehead argues that Hume commits the sensationalist fallacy of preoccupation with sense data and with conscious introspection as the sole method of examining experience, and second, Whitehead contends that this preoccupation causes Hume to neglect the discussion of the importance of power in experience. Therefore if the Whiteheadian charges against Hume are to be overturned a Humian response must be offered to this two-fold criticism. Essentially Hume must respond negatively to the first of two questions placed by Whitehead and affirmatively to the second:

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[1] See Hume's discussion of the doctrine of space and time for a similar instance in which his critical impulses tend to get the better of him. Chapter 3, Section 2, d.

1. Does Hume commit the sensationalist fallacy of regarding the search for sense data by means of conscious introspection as the sole method for examining human experience?
2. Does Hume understand the importance of a notion of power (a) as it is exhibited in the doctrine of perception and (b) as it is manifested in a doctrine of relations?

We shall undertake to respond for Hume to these two questions respectively.

a. Hume's response to the sensationalist fallacy

The central error in this fallacy lies in the assumption that sense data are exhaustively intelligible in themselves. Our preceding discussion of Hume's epistemology indicates that while Hume does appear to focus his efforts on an examination of sense data by means of conscious introspection, he also admits that such a method is inadequate. For as we have seen in the preceding chapter such a search for sense data with regard to the basis for moral judgements, for our consciousness of the causal connection, and for the foundation of our notions of space and time proves to be inadequate. A sensationalist investigation of each of these notions yields only sceptical results. Thus in view of our previous discussions it seems clear that Hume recognizes the central error in the sensationalist fallacy and stops short of arguing that sense data are exhaustively intelligible in themselves. Whitehead makes mention of this himself when he acknowledges that Hume's recognition that pure sense perception does not provide data for its own interpretation, marks the Treatise as the "irrefutable basis for all subsequent philosophic thought."[1] Thus, while there seems to be persuasive evidence that Hume does not commit the sensationalist fallacy, from the preceding discussions, as well as from Whitehead's own admission, perhaps some more direct response to Whitehead's charge is demanded.

As we indicated at the outset, one of the "prevalent habits of thought" which Whitehead sought to repudiate was the sensationalist doctrine of perception. And since Whitehead insists that Hume subscribes to this doctrine, the most effective method of countering Whitehead's first criticism would be to undertake an examination of Hume's doctrine of perception to determine if it does in fact commit the sensationalist fallacy. Since the phenomenon of perception appears to be so central to Hume's understanding of the origin of ideas, and consequently to his whole epistemology, it would appear to be the crucial doctrine in Hume, from Whitehead's standpoint. Hume's discussion of this doctrine which occurs in his account of "scepticism with regard to the senses"[1] is deceptive in the extreme. It would appear that in much of what he says he is presenting an evidential criticism of the "vulgar" theory of perception which rests upon an appeal to sense data alone. Thus, at first glance it might appear that he is guilty of Whitehead's charge but one needs to undertake a closer inspection. Therefore let us examine Hume's discussion of perception in some detail for it seems evident that the foundation for a more constructive picture of Hume as well as the basis for much of the confusion which surrounds his apparent sensationalist epistemology is contained in this doctrine.

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[1] M.T., p. 182.

Hume begins deceptively by stating his intention to investigate the question; "What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?"[2] His concern is to answer the question, why we attribute both continuity and independence to those objects which we perceive only fleetingly? And he addresses that concern to what appears to be an examination of evidence from the senses, from reason, and from the imagination.[3] Furthermore the initial thrust of his argument seems to be devoted to the search for sense data exclusively. Thus he concludes, after due examination, that the senses are incapable of providing the evidence demanded by the question he has posed.

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[1] See Tr., pp. 187-218. [2] Tr., p. 187.

[3] Tr., p. 188.

> they give us no notion of continu'd existence, because they cannot operate beyond the extent, in which they really operate. They as little produce the opinion of a distinct existence, because they neither can offer it to the mind as represented, nor original.[1]

Next he contends that reason also proves inadequate. Rational arguments appear to be irrelevant to our perception of the continuity and independence of objects. "So that upon the whole our reason neither does, nor ~~is it~~ possible it ever should upon any supposition, give us an assurance of the continu'd and distinct existence of body."[2] These two discoveries should alert us to the fact that Hume's apparent search for sense data is not so simple as it appeared at first glance.

However we are thrown off the track by Hume's next move, his criticism of the "vulgar" theory of perception. Here he appears to criticize the naive but common belief, that there is an identical relationship between the perceptions we have of the external world and the objects which exist in that world, on the basis that no evidence for such a view can be supplied. His words are:

> The same imagination is seduc'd into such an opinion only by means of the resemblance of certain perceptions since we find they are only our resembling perceptions, which we have a propension to suppose the same. This propension to bestow an identity on our resembling perceptions produces the fiction of a continu'd existence.[3]

And finally we are thoroughly misled if we take his next contention too seriously. There, he appears to be arguing on the basis of data from reason and the senses for the adequacy of an alternative theory of perception which Hume calls philosophical, it is really Cartesian,[1] and which maintains that there is a double existence of our perceptions and of objects in the world.

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[1] Tr., p. 191.
[2] Tr., p. 193.
[3] Tr., p. 209.

> The natural consequence of this reasoning shou'd be, that our perceptions have no more a continu'd than independent existence' and indeed philosophers have so far run into this opinion, that they change their system, and distinguish, betwixt perceptions and objects, of which the former are suppos'd to be interrupted, and perishing and different at every return' the latter to be uninterrupted and to preserve a continu'd existence and identity.[2]

But when this point is reached, Hume's apparent search for sense data becomes clear. For instead of demonstrating the adequacy of this latter theory of perception he turns upon it and in so doing demolishes the sensationalist thrust of the whole preceding discussion. For he contends that the philosophical theory of perception really contributes nothing because it appears to argue that the connection between objects is dictated by evidence. But no evidence can be collected to confirm such a theory.[3] Thus the philosophical system is finally dependent upon the "vulgar" system for all its authority.

> For as the philosophical system is found by experience to take hold of many minds, and in particular of all those, who reflect ever so little on this subject, it must derive all its authority from

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[1] See Tr., p. 249. [2] Tr., p. 211. [3] Tr., p. 212.

> the vulgar system; since it has no original authority of its own.[1]

So Hume finally concludes that such a search for evidence, without any consideration of the framework of authority and interpretation within which that evidence is to be considered is wrong-headed, and among philosophers, foolish. For philosophers miss the point when they seek evidence alone. Says Hume, the plain facts of the matter are that we believe in the continued and independent existence of objects of perception because of the influence of elements of experience which cannot be attributed to simple sensory impressions. Hume is hard pressed to describe just what these elements of experience are. In the course of his discussion he undertakes a lengthy digression in regarding perception. He also considers the implications of this inability to locate the basis for our sense perceptions in sense data themselves for the question of personal identity. With considerable feeling he laments the apparently disastrous situation in which his discovery leaves him.

> Methinks I am like a man, who having struck on many shoals, and having narrowly escap'd ship-wreck in passing a small frith, has yet the temerity to put out to sea in the same leaky weatherbeaten vessel, and even carries his ambition so far as to think of compassing the globe under these disadvantageous circumstances.[2]

However, it seems clear that though Hume is uncertain about the final character of this influence which leads him to believe in the continuity and independence of objects of sense perception, he also reveals a profound faith in the priority of emotive elements in experience over rational ones. This faith is expressed nowhere explicitly, but it is implicit in these remarks which Hume makes near the conclusion of his discussion of the problem of perception.

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[1] Tr., p. 213.

[2] Tr., p. 263.

> After the most accurate and exact of my reasonings, I can give no reason why I shou'd assent to it; and feel nothing but a *strong* propensity to consider objects *strongly* in that view, under which they appear to me. Experience is a principle, which instructs me in the several conjunctions of objects for the past. Habit is another principle, which determines me to expect the same for the future; and both of them conspiring to operate upon the imagination, make me form certain ideas in a more intense and lively manner, than others, which are not attended with the same advantages. Without this quality, by which the mind enlivens some ideas beyond others (which seemingly is so trivial, and so little founded on reason) we cou'd never assent to any argument, nor carry our view beyond those few objects, which are present to our senses. Nay, even to these objects we cou'd never attribute any existence, but what was dependent on the senses; and must comprehend them entirely in that succession of perceptions, which constitutes our self or person. Nay farther, even with relation to that succession, we cou'd only admit of those perceptions which are immediately present to our consciousness, nor cou'd those lively images, with which the memory presents us, be ever receiv'd as true pictures of past perceptions. *The memory, senses, and understanding are, therefore, all of them founded on the imagination, or the vivacity of our ideas.*[1]

Thus Hume's implicit conclusion is that the "vulgar" theory of perception is really more adequate than the philosophical one. and its adequacy is finally determined by the fact that the "vulgar" system is more directly influenced by

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[1] Tr., p. 265. (Last sentence italics mine)

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these emotional elements present in the imagination and the vivacity of ideas than it is by rational ones.

Essentially there are two parts to this implicit recognition of the superiority of the vulgar system. The first one is explicitly evident in the comment Hume makes about the "vulgar" system's reliance upon feeling rather than reason.

> And indeed, whatever convincing arguments philosophers may fancy they can produce to establish the belief of objects independent of the mind, tis' obvious these arguments are known but to very few, and that 'tis not by them, that children, peasants, and the greatest part of mankind are induc'd to attribute objects to some impressions, and deny them to others.[1]

In short, the "vulgar" system is superior because it is unswayed by the confusing claims of reason. The belief in objects independent of the mind is not arrived at by rational argument, in other words. But there is a second reason for its superiority, which is only implicit here. Hume's reference to the "greatest part of mankind" is reminiscent of Hume's discussion of the basis for our moral judgements, where he suggests that the very universality of morality is evidence of the fact that moral judgements ought to be regarded as laws of nature.[2] In this instance also Hume appears to rest his case upon an understanding of the way in which common practice, the vulgar assumptions about the external world, reveals an intimation about the

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[1] Tr., p. 193.

[2] See above, Chapter 3, Section 2, a.

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dependability of nature which allows mankind to place faith in its experience even when that experience proves incorrigible. Because the "vulgar" system bears the stamp of common experience it must be regarded as superior. Thus it can be maintained, that in this discussion of the apparent anti-intellectual sentiments of the common man, Hume was offering a statement of the futility of rationalism rather than an attack upon the stupidity of the "greatest part of mankind."

In brief, Hume is implying that the commonly felt predisposition of men everywhere to regard their perceptions as continued and independent reveals a uniform element in human experience which must be regarded as an indication of the primordial influence of nature. Such a conclusion is prefigured in this comment from an earlier stage of this discussion.

> There is a great difference betwixt such opinions as we form after a calm and profound reflection, and such as we embrace by a kind of instinct or natural impulse, on account of their suitableness and conformity to the mind. If these opinions become contrary, 'tis not difficult to foresee which of them will have the advantage. As long as our attention is bent upon the subject, the philosophical and study'd principle may prevail; but the moment we relax our thoughts, nature will display herself and draw us back to our former opinion.[1]

As we have observed in previous discussions, the influence of feeling, explicative of the influence of nature, is finally the dominant influence in Hume. And although such a conclusion is developed in only a cautious and cursory fashion, it does seem clear that in the final analysis, Hume's doctrine of perception really does rest much more fundamentally upon this intuition of the reliability of nature, which is communicated by feelings, than it does upon either sense data or conscious introspection.

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[1] Tr., p. 214.

What is to be made of Whitehead's charge then? Does Hume commit the sensationalist fallacy? Hume is certainly guilty of presenting the most confusing discussion of perception. His employment of sensationalism to reveal the limits of sensationalism, and his lengthy digressions and melancholy ruminations are easily misunderstood. Thus it is little wonder that his views have been misinterpreted. However it is clear that in the end his doctrine of perception rests more fundamentally upon emotive elements common to all men than it does upon sense data. In face there seems to be considerable similarity between Whitehead's suggestion that the proper "store house" of philosophy is an appeal to literature, language, and common practice, and Hume's endorsement of the "vulgar" theory of perception, because of its universal acceptance. Thus in terms of Whitehead's charges, Hume is guilty of making misleading comments and of presenting an appeal to the reliability of nature which is only partially explicated,[1] but in the end it would seem that so far as the errors of sensationalism are concerned, Whitehead has chastised Hume unjustly. For, in conclusion, Hume would appear to share Whitehead's assumption that sense data alone, without some intuition of the deeper emotional elements common to all human experience, presents an inadequate understanding of perception. Thus Hume illustrates by means of sensationalism itself the limits of sensationalism, in his assertions; that nature through feeling and common practice provides a basic intelligibility which allows us to understand our perceptions as continued and independent even though we can discover no sense data, which confirms such an hypothesis. Therefore, in terms of the first question posed by Whitehead ---

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[1] For a more complete discussion of the causes for the incomplete character of Hume's appeal to nature see Appendix B.

> Does Hume commit the sensationalist fallacy of regarding the search for sense data by means of conscious introspection as the sole method for examining human experience?

a clear negative answer can be given. Sense data and conscious introspection demonstrate only the impossibility of explicating our human experience of perception. Unless these elements are complemented by a naturalistic understanding of the influence of the feelings, the human experience of perception is incomprehendible.

b. Hume's response to the question of power

The second question posed by Whitehead ---

> Does Hume understand the importance of a notion of power;
> (a) as it is exhibited in the doctrine of perception and
> (b) as it is manifested in a doctrine of relations?

is really the basis for Whitehead's contention in Modes of Thought that Hume presents us with a dead nature because of his failure to present us with a doctrine of power comparable to the understanding which is presented by Locke. As we saw above, Whitehead considers Locke's discussion significant because, to his way of thinking, Locke recognized that the problem of power and the problem of perception are the same problem, and secondly, the discussion of power is also another way of discussing the need for a doctrine of relations. We shall discuss Hume's views on power and perception and power in relations separately in order to examine these charges in greater detail.

(1) the notion of power and the problem of perception

From our foregoing discussion of perception it should be obvious that Hume also recognized the correlation of the problem of power with the problem of perception. This is clearly evident in Hume's early treatment of the origin of ideas. In those early remarks it is clear that his epistemology is essentially an epistemology founded upon some concept of power. Impressions are distinguished from ideas solely upon the basis of the greater "force, violence, vivacity"[1] which they exhibit when they appear to the mind. Of course this means that the ideas which we form as copies of these impressions, according to Hume, are possessed of power as well. For the difference between impressions and ideas is a difference of degree, not kind. As Hume says; "the difference betwixt these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind."[1] But Hume does not really explore the development of that idea of power in this early discussion of the origin of ideas.

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[1] Tr., p. 1.

The full explication, albeit ambiguously stated, of the relation between power and perception is contained in the doctrine of perception. At the risk of some redundancy we shall retrace some of our steps in order to discuss this relationship. As we illustrated above, in the discussion of perception Hume is attempting to find some satisfactory account of why it is we believe in the continuity and independence of our perceptions. We have already referred to his conclusions that neither the senses themselves nor reason alone can provide us with this explanation. He therefore concludes "that opinion must be entirely owing to the imagination."[2]

This is a significant move for Hume because with it he is contending that our perceptual apparatus is essentially guided by the faculty of imagination. Although Hume's terminology is not always consistent, it does seem clear that when he refers to the faculty of imagination he is really speaking about the phenomenon of belief. In short it is the imagination which causes us to believe in the continuity and independence of our perceptions. In one place he remarks concerning the "vulgar" notion of continuity and independence; "'Tis indeed evident, that as the vulgar suppose their perceptions to be their only objects, and at the same time believe the continu'd existence of matter, we must account for the origin of the belief upon that supposition."[1] But there is some cause for confusion when it is suggested that it is the faculty of imagination which is operative in the experience of perception for Hume's discussion of the imagination is not unambiguous. He speaks frequently of the seemingly arbitrary manner in which the mind "feigns" various objects of belief. And thus some might suggest that when Hume maintains that the faculty of imagination aids in perception he is merely suggesting that the mind is misled into believing various fictions by the operation of the imagination. If that interpretation were pressed one might argue that the notion of power in Hume is only a product of the fancy. Indeed some might argue that this is the only view which can be consistent with Hume's scepticism.

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[1] Tr., p. 1. [2] Tr., p. 193.

However, several Humian interpreters have maintained that Hume distinguishes between two senses of the imagination. E. J. Furlong contends that Hume uses the term "fancy" to refer to the arbitrary and whimsical operations of the imagination in which it is merely a faculty of feigning, and "imagination" when referring to the faculty of belief.[1] A portion of the confusion stems from the fact that Hume speaks of two types of fictions. In some instances he speaks of fictions such as a golden mountain and the New Jerusalem, in others he refers to our ideas of necessary connection or the external world. And while the distinction between these two senses of the word is not always clear, it does seem possible to distinguish as Furlong does between mere reveries of the fancy which are products of the faculty of feigning, and "natural universal fictions" which are products of the faculty of belief.[2] Thus it is the imagination, in this second sense, which can be regarded as the sense which is operative in the act of perception.

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[1] Tr., p. 209

And it is in this sense that Hume views power as operative in perception, as is evident in this passage.

> Thus it appears, that the belief or assent, which always attends the memory and senses, is nothing but the vivacity of those perceptions they present' and this alone distinguishes them from the imagination. To believe is in this case to feel an immediate impression of the senses, or a repetition of that impression in the memory. 'Tis merely the force and liveliness of the perception which constitutes the first act of the judgement, and lays the foundation of that reasoning, which we build upon it, when we trace the relation of cause and effect.[3]

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[1] E. J. Furlong, Imagination, New York, 1961, p. 102.

[2] For a comprehensive discussion of this understanding of the role of the imagination in Hume see, "The Place of the Imagination in Hume's Epistemology," Richard Lineback, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana, 1963.

[3] Tr., p. 86.

Here the relation between some idea of power and perception is unmistakeable. It is power described in terms of vivacity, force and liveliness which is evident both in the act of perception and in the acts of "judgement" and "reasoning" which follow it. the greater dynamism present in impressions empowers the mind to believe them and thus to distinguish between arbitrary fancies and the "natural universal fictions." In the preceding chapter we recounted the several terms which Hume applies to the phenomenon of belief.[1] The consistent term which runs through all of this discussion of belief as "act of mind," or "lively idea," or "vivacity of impression," is the notion of power. In every instance it is this sense of a natural sense of efficacy which leads the mind to both form impressions and to give them credence as ideas. The sense of efficacy which is felt in belief is dramatically expressed in this phrase.

> An idea assented to feels different from a fictitious idea that the fancy alone presents to us; and this different feeling I endeavour to explain by calling it a superior force or vivacity, or solidity, or firmness, or steadiness.[2]

And it is this same sense of dynamism which is felt in the act of perception. For it is through the feeling of power which is communicated by belief that we are led to regard our perceptions as continuous and independent of the human mind and therefore reliable.

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[1] See Chapter 3, Section 2, c.

[2] Tr., p. 629. (Italics mine)

What then is to be made of this first portion of the question posed by Whitehead regarding Hume's understanding of the importance of a notion of power with regard to the doctrine of perception? As we have noted in previous discussions of Hume, perhaps some of his most central notions contain an ambiguity and evidence a reluctance to state explicitly precisely what would be demanded if Hume were to respond directly to Whitehead's charges. Such is the case with this discussion of power and perception. Nowhere does Hume state explicitly that the problem of power and the problem of perception are the same problem. However, from the preceding references cited, it does seem clear that Hume recognized that such a doctrine of perception could never be comprehensible without discussing the importance of power or efficacy along side it. So if Whitehead were to demand an explicit answer to his question, the reply would have to be, "no, Hume does not state explicitly that perception and power are inextricably related." However such an answer would miss the entire direction of Hume's "new scene of thought," for it is clear that throughout this whole treatment of belief and perception the importance of power is fundamental for Hume. And although Hume's discussion of this issue may be less explicitly stated than Locke's, it does appear that there is this common agreement between them, an agreement which Whitehead apparently overlooked in his fascination with Locke's treatment of power.

(2) the notion of power and the doctrine of relations

But what of the second portion of this second Whiteheadian question?

> Does Hume understand the importance of a notion of power: (b) as it is manifested in a doctrine of relations?

Surely it will not be so easy to contend that, contrary to Whitehead's interpretation, Hume also espoused something like a doctrine of relations. For, after all, Hume's atomism is notorious. Such might be the response of one[1] who has adhered strictly to the traditional understanding of Hume. His infamous discussion of personal identity would appear to signal Hume's commitment to the most radical form of atomism. Hume's statement, "I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions,"[2] would appear to yield that inescapable conclusion. What most interpreters miss is the passage which immediately follows this one. There Hume asks:

> What then gives us so great a propension to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possest of an invariable and uninterrupted existence thro' the whole course of our lives? In order to answer this question, *we must distinguish betwixt personal identity, as it regards*

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[1] See A.I., p. 129. (Whitehead here remarks, "The atomism of Democritus in the science of Cosmology is replaced by the atomism of Hume in the science of Epistemology.")

[2] Tr., p. 253.

> *our thought or imagination and as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves.*[1]

In this passage Hume is making the same move which he made in the discussion of causality. His conclusion is that if one wishes some "idea," that is some logical statement of the basis for personal identity he is bound to be disappointed. However, if one looks instead to the connection provided by the passions, a connection which is felt in the experience of belief, then that is quite a different story.

But how is such a perspective to become manifest when so much of what Hume says about the passions is fragmentary and ambiguous and when it is clearly evident in Hume's own mind that the early, epistemological sections of the *Treatise* are the more significant ones? As a case in point Hume argues in the *Abstract* of the *Treatise*, a short pamphlet Hume wrote anonymously in an attempt to popularize the *Treatise*, that the apparently atomistic doctrine of the association of ideas is the most significant contribution of his philosophy.

> Through this whole book there are great pretensions to new discoveries in philosophy; but if anything can entitle the author to so glorious a name as that of an "inventor," it is the use he makes of the principle of the association of ideas, which enters into most of his philosophy.[2]

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[1] Tr., p. 253. (Italics mine)

[2] David Hume, "An Abstract of a Treatise of Human Nature," included as an appendix to the *Inquiry*, in Library of Liberal Arts edition, p. 198.

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Perhaps this then is the best place to begin this investigation of Hume's reputed atomism, as well as the possible basis for a doctrine of relations in Hume. For the discussion of the association of ideas is an interesting example of the foolhardiness of accepting an author's own estimate, particularly his early estimate, such as this one was, of what constitutes the most profound contribution of his philosophy. It soon becomes clear that the association of ideas was not intended as explicative of an epistemological atomism, but on the contrary was included originally as a means of demonstrating the relatedness of all ideas.

Kemp Smith argues persuasively[1] that books two and three of the Treatise, in which Hume discusses association in terms of the passions, in particular in terms of the notion of sympathy which is one of the foundations of the moral sense, preceded the composition of book one where these same principles were applied to the association of ideas. Apparently, says Kemp Smith, this is another indication of Hume's attempt to parallel Newton's discovery of the laws of gravity with a discovery of the laws or "mechanisms" of human thought. Kemp Smith includes a sentence from Hume's Dissertation Concerning the Passions which clearly points toward that intention in Hume.

> I pretend not to have exhausted this subject. (associations) It is sufficient for my purpose, if I have

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[1] See Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 239 and 245.

> made it appear that, in the production and conduct of the passions, there is a certain regular mechanism, which is susceptible of as accurate a disquisition as the laws of motion, optics, hydrostatics, or any part of natural philosophy.[1]

However, as we indicated in chapter two, apparently the initial attraction which Newton held for Hume is eventually eclipsed by the biological emphases of Frances Hutcheson. And the doctrine of the association of ideas provides yet another confirmation of that occurrence.

It is a comparatively easy task to speak about the natural association of the passions which occurs on the basis of such phenomena as sympathy, empathy, and fellow-feeling. Such phenomena would appear to be nearly universal characteristics of human behavior and thus it is little wonder that Hume began to speak of them as "mechanisms." But such "mechanisms" were not static and inflexible principles, but dynamic faculties, explicative of a notion of power animating and uniting human nature. And the clear confirmation of such a conclusion is evident in the rapid disappearance of the discussion of the "mechanisms" of association when they come to be applied to the association of ideas.

For it is one thing to speak of the ready attraction which the passions have for one another, but quite another to speak about the natural attraction of the ideas. While one can speak of being sympathetically disposed toward a particular idea the presence of power and efficacy is not so readily discerned among ideas as it is with regard to the passions. And this difficulty eventually leads to Hume's abandonment of his reputed doctrine of the association of ideas. It is clear that Hume introduces the notion of the association of ideas as a means of demonstrating the dynamism which animates relations of ideas, hence his suggestion that association is a "gentle force"[1] which unites our thoughts. However the difficulty with his attempt to explicate such a doctrine of association when applied to ideas is compounded by the fact that such a doctrine is fundamentally premised upon the relation of resemblance. In his early discussion in book one he insists that resemblance "is a relation without which no philosophical relation can exist."[2] Thus if ideas are to be related they must be associated by resemblance of some type. But thereby hangs a great confusion. For it is possible to talk about resemblance with regard to the passions without much difficulty. However to discuss the relation of ideas in terms of resemblance is to come dangerously close, for an empiricist, to Platonism. And Hume's definition of the relation of resemblance does have a Platonic tone about it:

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[1] David Hume, op. cit., cited in Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 71.

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[1] Tr., p. 10.

[2] Tr., p. 14. (It is easy to see why Hume might have insisted upon this since resemblance would appear to be the closest analogue to the phenomenon of sympathy in the passions, a notion which if Kemp Smith is correct, Hume had already worked out with regard to his discussion of the moral sense.)

"'resemblance'-- a picture naturally makes us think of the man it was drawn for";[1] To pursue such a doctrine of association on these lines would yield, not a sense of dynamism, but a doctrine of associations between static entitles. Thus quite early in the discussion of the association of ideas, Hume intrudes the importance of causation as yet another significant principle determinative in our association of ideas. Apparently he sought to retain some dimension of dynamism in this introduction of the discussion of causality, though in so doing he greatly confuses things. In one paragraph he evidences his confusion for he remarks "our imagination runs easily from one idea to any other that _resembles_ it, and that this quality alone is to the fancy a sufficient bond and association."[2] And then concludes two sentences later.

> 'Tis sufficient to observe, that there is no relation, which produces a stronger connexion in the fancy, and makes one idea more readily recall another, than the relation of cause and effect betwixt their objects.[3]

Evidently Hume had begun to see that if he was to develop a doctrine of the association of ideas which was consistent with his own intention to speak of the dynamism which unites our ideas he had to appeal to relations which have a dynamic quality about them. Causation has a more dynamic character than resemblance and in his conclusion of the discussion of the principles of association he indicates that he has made his choice, for he remarks; "Of the three relations abovementioned, this of causation is the most extensive."[1] Thus Hume saves himself from Platonism but only at the expense of his doctrine of the association of ideas. For with the exception of the reference to the association of the passions in book two of the Treatise, which according to Kemp Smith was written first any way, he never again mentions association of ideas. Apparently the discussion of causation takes the place of the association of ideas altogether.

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[1] Tr., p. 198.

[2] Tr., p. 11.

[3] Tr., p. 11.

This development in Hume's thinking must be regarded as a profound move which is indicative of the clear priority of some notion of power or efficacy in his thinking regarding a doctrine of associations. For the significance which attaches to causation in Hume seems to lie primarily in his estimate of the power which the relation of cause and effect has in relating both our ideas and our passions. He makes this explicit in the discussion "of the idea of necessary connexion" when he says:

> I begin with observing that the terms of efficacy, agency, power, force, energy, necessity, connexion, and productive quality, are all nearly synonimous; and therefore 'tis an absurdity to employ any of them in defining the rest.[2]

So causation is an important term for discussing the relations which we perceive in the world around us because it conveys a sense of dynamism or efficacy.

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[1] Tr., p. 12.

[2] Tr., p. 157.

But once again we encounter that incredible complexity which Selfy-Bigge suggests rivals even Hegel. For instead of speaking forthrightly and confidently of the dynamism and efficacy which is the property of the relation of causality, Hume next embarks upon his investigation, which we have already discussed above, of the absence of any basis for our idea of the power which we commonly attribute to causation. It is little wonder that Whitehead and others concluded that Hume neglected the discussion of a doctrine of power as it relates to relations.

In spite of the fact that we have already considered Hume's doctrine of causality, since we are particularly concerned at this point with Hume's treatment of causal power which we have suggested he intended to substitute for a doctrine of the association of ideas, we will retrace these steps once more. In this discussion of the absence of any basis for our idea of power Hume again makes use of sensationalism in paradoxical fashion, to show the limits of sensationalism. After undertaking an "experimental" investigation of the conceivable impressions which might be regarded as the basis for our idea of causal efficacy he concludes:

> The small success, which has been met with in all the attempts to fix this power, has at last oblig'd philosophers to conclude, that the ultimate force and efficacy of nature is perfectly unknown to

> us, and that 'tis in vain we search for it in all the known qualities of matter.[1]

So there can be no basis for our idea of power so long as we undertake a conventional search for it in reason or experience. Sensationalism of any type fails to discover the basis for this notion which appears to have such universal acceptance.

Next Hume makes use of sensationalism in critical, indeed polemical, fashion to attack the Cartesian attempt to locate the basis for this power in the activity of God. The argument which Hume directs against the Cartesians is that if they deny that matter contains in itself any efficacy or power they must also deny this quality to divinity.

> For if every idea be deriv'd from an impression, the idea of deity proceeds from the same origin; and if no impression, either of sensation or reflection, implies any force or efficacy, 'tis equally impossible to discover or even imagine any such active principle in the deity.[2]

Thus a strict sensationalism denies the possibility of divine efficacy as well.

Finally Hume contends that there can be no basis for our idea of power in our own minds. In the appendix to the Treatise, Hume argues;

> In short, the actions of the mind are, in this respect, the same with those of matter. We perceive only their constant conjunction; nor can we ever reason beyond it. No internal impression has an apparent energy, more than external objects have. Since, therefore, matter is confess'd by philosophers to operate by an unknown force, we

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[1] Tr., p. 159.

[2] Tr., p. 160.

> shou'd in vain hope to attain an idea of force by consulting our own minds.[1]

Thus, Hume seems to have covered all the exits. There can be no basis in reason, in revelation, or in the human mind itself for our idea of power as it relates to causal efficacy. Scepticism would appear to be the natural conclusion.

However we have seen above how Hume seeks to complement such a point of view by suggesting that there are other ways of viewing human nature which do not yield such sceptical conclusions. It is this move on Hume's part which must finally be regarded as his ultimate departure from sensationalism. Specifically in the passages which immediately follow, Hume suggests, albeit rather ambiguously at times, another alternative to this disastrous attempt to come to grips with our idea of power. Because this is a crucial passage it is important to see it in full.

> Thus upon the whole we may infer, that when we talk of any being, whether of a superior or inferior nature, as endow'd with a power or force, proportion'd to any effect; when we speak of a necessary connexion betwixt objects and suppose, that this connexion depends upon an efficacy or energy, with which any of these objects are endow'd; in all these expressions, so apply'd, we really have no distinct meaning, and make use only of common words, without any clear and determinate ideas. But as 'tis more probable, that these expressions do here lose their true meaning by being wrong apply'd than that they never have any meaning; 'twill be proper to bestow another consideration on this subject, to see if possibly we can discover the nature and origin of those ideas, we annex to them.[2]

Hume was aware that his discussion of the absence of any rational basis for our idea of causal connection would lead some to conclude that he denied the possibility of any notion of power as applied to causality. He did not and this passage demonstrates that fact. It also demonstrates his contention that those who seek a rational or logical definition for power are certain to be disappointed. Hence Hume's discussion of psychological necessity, which follows the above passage, takes on new point. Apparently it is in this psychological discussion of the idea of power that the terms can be "properly applied" to use Hume's words. Thus it woudl appear that Hume really intended to suggest that the notion of power is a psychological phenomenon, a "determination" of the mind, an active propensity rather than an idea. And furthermore Hume regarded this conclusion not as a sop to those who couldn't cope with a world where there is no rational basis for causal efficacy, but as a genuine alternative account. Perhaps this fact alone is demonstrated in Hume's earlier conclusion that association occurs in terms of the passions. The idea of power which is generated by the phenomenon of psychological necessity can then be regarded as merely a further extenion of this earlier contention that it is the passions which provide the relations in experience.

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[1] Tr., p. 633.

[2] Tr., p. 162.

Such a point of view might be corroborated by Hume's own words in that in his concluding discussion, where he enumerates the two definitions of causality, he suggests that the term "association" might be applied to the

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psychological definition of causality.

> There may be two definitions given of this relation, which are only different, by their presenting a different view of the same object, and making us consider it *either as a philosophical or as a natural relation; either as a comparison of two ideas, or as an association betwixt them*.[1]

Perhaps too much weight can be attached to Hume's use of the term, "association," in this context. However, it seems clear that Hume's purpose here is to make a marked contrast between a "philosophical," and I think one might argue that Hume here means sensationalist, understanding of relations, and a natural, or psychological, understanding. It is only in the latter discussion of the causal relation that it is possible to perceive any dynamic connection. A philosophical account allows one only to perceive a certain resemblance between entities which remain static and disconnected. Therefore it is clear that Hume's emphasis upon the psychological definition of causality has the purpose of illustrating his implicit assumption that it is only by means of this *felt* connection that it is possible to talk about association in any form.

Thus we can see, once again, that the importance of the passions reasserts itself, in this instance as a means of presenting an understanding of the related character of experience. However, because of this implicitness, as well as the labyrinthine track which the preceding discussion has taken, perhaps it would be prudent to recapitulate in order to bring some of the implications of this implicit understanding of relations to the surface. Hume's treatments of relations appears to follow three successive steps:

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[1] Tr., p. 170. (Italics mine)

1. Hume initiates his discussion of relations with his doctrine of the association of ideas because he is seeking to explicate the dynamic connection -- the "gentle force" -- which is present in human experience.
2. The discussion of the association of ideas is abandoned precisely because its reliance upon the relation of resemblance fails to yield a truly dynamic sense of relationships.
3. The psychological discussion of the causal connection then eclipses this earlier discussion because it allows Hume to treat the related character of experience more dynamically, in terms of felt connections.

The theme which runs throughout this entire discussion is that connectedness of experience is felt rather than intellectually apprehended. Some have contended that it is this very denial of the cognitive awareness of connections which must render Hume's philosophy atomistic. However, if the emphasis is changed so that Hume's denial of the cognitive awareness of relations is seen as only the prelude to his major theme,[1] that it is by means of the passions that the relatedness of experience is understood, then it becomes possible to see Hume from a new perspective.

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[1] This denial of a cognitive character to our awareness of feelings is one of the most troublesome aspects of Hume's thought. See Chap. 5, Section 2, c, (1) for a more complete treatment of this issue.

Clearly, the fundamental emphasis which Hume gives to the influence of the passions is evidence that Hume cannot be considered an atomist. Experience is inextricably related for Hume. However the difficulty arises in the fact that this discussion of the relatedness of experience appears in an implicit, and at times confused manner, such that it is impossible to argue that Hume presents a fully developed doctrine of relations. There are sound philosophical reasons why Hume felt himself prevented from engaging in such a discussion, and because they would detract from the line of argument taken here, they cannot be included at this point.[1] However what Hume does reveal about his understanding of the connectedness of experience does permit us to respond to Whitehead's question.

The query which we addressed to Hume on Whitehead's behalf was:

> Does Hume understand the importance of a notion of power - (b) as it is manifested in a doctrine of relations?

The answer which is given to such a question cannot be stated with as much emphasis as has been the case in our presentation of the responses which Hume gives to the preceding questions. Hume's discussion of the connectedness of experience is much too inchoate to be regarded as a doctrine of relations. Even in terms of Whitehead's analysis of Locke's treatment of power and relations, it is not clear that Hume recognized that power must be regarded as both passive, (that is as capability to receive change) and active, (that is as capability to exert change upon others). Thus Hume does not answer Whitehead's explicit question with complete satisfaction.

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[1] This discussion is included in Appendix B, "A Defense of the Attenuated Development of Hume's Doctrine of Power."

However it does seem possible to conclude that Hume shared the concern which was fundamental to this Whiteheadian question. The presupposition out of which this question grows is contained in Whitehead's comment -- "Our experience starts with a sense of power, and proceeds to the discrimination of individualities and their qualities."[1] It was Whitehead's judgement that Hume failed to recognize this fact. However, our discussion of Hume's treatment of both perception and the connectedness of experience reveals an opposite opinion. While it appears that Hume regards sense data as fundamental and thus projects an atomistic philosophy, we have attempted to demonstrate that these aspects of his philosophy are significant only because they reveal the inadequacies of sensationalism. The discussion of sense data and an apparent atomistic attitude toward relations appear first in Hume, but this is the only priority which can be given to them. In terms of Hume's own presuppositions it is clear that this emphasis upon "individualities and their qualities" is finally secondary to a less explicitly stated reliance upon the influence of natural beliefs, and the felt connectedness of experience. And these elements of experience appear to be quite similar to Whitehead's own understanding of that sense of power which he considers prior to all other experience. Therefore, in terms of an explicit doctrine of relations, it must be admitted that Hume fails to respond adequately to the questions which Whitehead addresses to him. But in terms of the presuppositions which underlie that Whiteheadian query, it appears that Whitehead and Hume are not so far apart.

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[1] M.T., p. 162.

3. Conclusions

a. Summation of Hume's response to the Whiteheadian critique

As we have interpreted it, the Whiteheadian critique of Hume is two-fold. First, Whitehead criticizes Hume's preoccupation with sense data, in particular the data communicated by visual sensations, by means of the process of the conscious examination of human thought processes. And secondly, Whitehead charges Hume with the neglect of an understanding of the dynamic character of experience because of his failure to develop a doctrine of power comparable to that of Locke. The underlying presupposition in this attack upon Hume is that Hume and Newton are responsible for presenting a picture of reality which is "gravely defective" because of its neglect of the emotional, purposive, and dynamic characteristics of experience. In response to this charge, we have attempted to demonstrate, by citing Hume's analysis of the deficiencies of sense data and conscious introspection, that Whitehead's estimate of Hume is also defective. Hume concludes that a doctrine of perception which rests itself upon the information provided by these modes of investigation can never be adequate. His judgement is that the philosophical system which attempts to follow this methodology precisely is not only inadequate, it is also contradictory. Thus we have seen how Hume finally confesses his admiration for the "vulgar" understanding of perception. And his admiration is premised upon his discovery that the "vulgar" system is based upon the phenomenon of feelings and natural beliefs which are the universal consequences of the influence of human passions. In short, contrary to Whitehead's estimate, Hume's doctrine of perception does recognize the necessity for understanding the presence of a doctrine of power, for Hume acknowledges that it is only when such a dynamic element is added that our human experience of perception can be made intelligible.

Secondly, while the evidence is not quite so explicit here, it does seem possible to argue, with some certainty, that Hume did understand the importance of the doctrine of power with regard to the connectedness of experience. As we have attempted to argue, Hume's apparent atomism is used only as a foil to illustrate the difficulty of discussing the connectedness of experience without intruding some more dynamic notion, i. e. the importance of the passions. Therefore, in contrast to Whitehead's estimate, it does seem possible to state that Hume understood the importance of the basic insight of the philosophy of organism, that the sense of relatedness which human experience reveals is only apprehendible in terms of some understanding of the influence of the sense of power communicated by our emotions.

b. Questions raised by Hume's response to Whitehead

Hopefully the foregoing discussion has illustrated clearly the errors in Whitehead's misapprehension of Hume. However, if it has accomplished that task, no doubt it has also raised some questions about the deeper implications of such a correction of Whitehead's estimate. To be certain, we cannot respond exhaustively to questions about the implications of such a discussion. The purpose of this dissertation was merely to illustrate the nature of the Whiteheadian misapprehension, as well as to show how it might be corrected. However, since these larger issues are intimately connected with the relevance of this thesis, perhaps it might be useful to respond, in cursory fashion, to some of the additional questions which appear as a result of this discussion.

There appear to be three major questions which present themselves as a result of these discussions:

(1) Granted that there is this apparent congruity between Hume and Whitehead, can it really be maintained that the understanding of the task of philosophy is similar in Whitehead and Hume?

(2) Is the role of the feelings or the passions really similar in both figures?

(3) If it can be argued that a sensationalist philosophy wasn't his fundamental goal, why did Hume subscribe to sensationalism?

We shall attempt to deal briefly with each of these questions, with the expectation that later writing, by this author, might undertake to respond to some of them in more detail.

(1) Question one: Granted that there is this apparent congruity between Hume and Whitehead, can it really be maintained that the understanding of the task of philosophy is similar in Whitehead and Hume?

In response to this first question regarding the task of philosophy, the primary controversy to which this question is addressed is the difference of opinion between Whiteheadian and Analytic philosophers concerning the task of philosophy. In order to effectively illustrate this difference, perhaps it would be illuminating to refer to a recent study by David Pears of Wittgenstein's philosophy.[1] In this book, Pears argues that Wittgenstein is continuous with a form of "subtle positivism" which he traces to Hume. In contrast to more destructive, nihilistic forms of positivism, Pears argues, that Hume was the author of a much more constructive form of positivism.

> This type of positivism is quite different from the much better-known destructive type. The general message of positivism is that there is no knowledge but scientific knowledge, and even if this is not a true thesis, it can have a salutary effect in philosophy. For when philosophy takes the form of speculative

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[1] See David Pears, Ludwig Wittgenstein, New York, Viking Press, 1970.

> metaphysics, it pretends to be a kind of super science, and positivism refuses to allow it this false identity, and forces it out into the open where its ambiguous character can be dissected.[1]

There is little to take issue with in this estimate of Hume. Pears' interpretation of Hume's constructive scepticism coincides neatly with the interpretation which has been given here, although perhaps there is a significant difference of emphasis in his coining of the term, "subtle positivism." And this difference becomes apparent when Pears attempts to demonstrate the connection between Hume and Wittgenstein, regarding the task of philosophy.

> ...when this restrictive theory of knowledge is applied to religion and morality, it produces a crisis... The answer to the question, what their basis is, may take a psychological or anthropological form: "That is how people are." Hume's theory of morality is an example of this subtle form of positivism. It is anthropocentric, but not skeptical, because the suggestion is that human nature provides a sufficiently firm basis for morality.[2]

Pears argues that Wittgenstein takes the same point of view.

> In his later work Wittgenstein moves toward a different solution, which is closely related to Hume's subtle kind of positivism. The transcendental treatment of religion and morality has gone, and its place has been taken by a kind of linguistic naturalism: there are these forms of human life and thought, and since they have no independent basis outside themselves, a request for their justification can be met only by a careful description of the language in which they find expression, and of its place in our lives.[3]

While there is some question in my mind about the facility with which Pears draws this connection between Hume and Wittgenstein, without being overly gratuitous, it does seem possible to agree with his interpretation of the task of philosophy as Hume conceived it. According to Pears, Hume had two fundamental aims which philosophy ought to restrict its purview to human experience, specifically to seek to explain exhaustively the generalizations which follow from that experience, and secondly, in this explanation, it ought to seek to avoid the pseudo-scientific pretensions of dogmatic metaphysics. From a Whiteheadian standpoint it is not difficult to show how Whitehead's understanding of the task of philosophy can be recognized as similar even to this Analytic interpretation of Hume's understanding. Although this is not to suggest that Whitehead and Pears or Whitehead and Wittgenstein agree.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 27f. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 28. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Admittedly, such an attempt to trace a similar attitude toward the task of philosophy has an aspect of anachronism about it. The philosophical world and, especially, the intellectual opponents which Hume faced were quite different from the world and the opponents faced by Whitehead. So one cannot help but risk the danger of overstatement in such a discussion. However, in terms of the two aspects which Pears mentions, it does seem possible to demonstrate that Whitehead could agree with this understanding of the task of philosophy. First, it is patently evident that Whitehead, too, sought to view experience through the paradigm of human experience alone. In the preface to Process and Reality, Whitehead makes plain his intention to deal with the same human problems which have characterized the major philosophies of the modern period.

> *In order to obtain a reasonably complete account of human experience*, considered in relation to the philosophical problems which naturally arise, the group of philosophers and scientists belonging to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been considered, in particular Descartes, Newton, Locke, *Hume*, Kant.[1]

Another instance in the same preface describes Whitehead's intention to further explicate the philosophies of two eminently human experience-oriented philosophers, William James and John Dewey. Whitehead contends; "One of my preoccupations has been to rescue their type of thought from the charge of anti-intellectualism, which rightly or wrongly has been associated with it."[2] But perhaps the most complete statement of Whitehead's intention to remain true to human experience alone comes at the conclusion of his introductory chapter in *Process and Reality*.

> Philosophy destroys its usefulness when it indulges in brilliant feats of explaining away. It is then trespassing with the wrong equipment upon the field of particular sciences. *Its ultimate appeal is to the general consciousness of what in practice we experience*... The useful function of philosophy is to promote the most general systematization of civilized thought.[3]

While it is not possible to understand the sincerity of Whitehead's intention to remain true to human experience without some larger picture of Whitehead's cosmology, in particular an understanding of how the basic model for his philosophical construction is an organismic understanding

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[1] P.R., p. vf. (Italics mine) [2] P.R., p. vii.

[3] P.R., p. 25f. (Italics mine)

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of the human body-mind, the basic aim of Whitehead's vision is clearly expressed in the above statement. Contrary to those who misunderstand him, and this must include the vast majority of Analytic philosophers, Whitehead does not intend to engage in occult speculation. His basic aim is to adumbrate those abstractions which follow from a generalized description of human experience. In this respect his vision of the task of philosophy is not fundamentally different from the task of philosophy which Hume envisioned. Just as Hume sought to explain the universal human experiences of morality, sense perception, relationships, personal identity, so Whitehead seeks to explicate the values, purposes, and connections perceived in human life.

But the charge which, undoubtedly, Pears and his Analytic colleagues would bring in reply to the above statement is that Whitehead makes too much of human experience. He engages in metaphysical generalizations which transcend the limits of the experiential world. This is a charge which is harder to counter for two reasons. First, as Wittgenstein himself so graphically illustrates, the limits of the experiential world are nearly impossible to precisely determine. And secondly, it must be admitted that certain of Whitehead's followers have engaged in metaphysical speculation which comes dangerously close to precisely the obfuscating kind of metaphysics which Hume set himself against.[1] In spite of these difficulties, it is possible to draft a response to this charge which meets both the criticisms of Pears, et. al. and also illustrates Whitehead's agreement with the second major aim of Hume's description of the task of philosophy, namely the avoidance of dogmatic metaphysics and its pseudo-scientific pretensions. The above mentioned quotation, concerning the appeal of philosophy to the "general consciousness of what we in practice experience," should illustrate Whitehead's intention to hue a line which closely follows our most common insights about the world of everyday experience, avoiding those occult hypotheses which Hume, himself, found so repugnant. In another place in this same introduction to Process and Reality, Whitehead makes this intention to avoid occult metaphysics even more explicit.

> Whatever is found in "practice" must lie within the scope of metaphysical description. When the description fails to include the Practice," the metaphysics is inadequate and requires revision. There can be no appeal to practice to supplement metaphysics, so long as we remain contented with our metaphysical doctrines. Metaphysics is nothing but the description of generalities which apply to all the details of practice.[2]

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[1] If it has not been immediately apparent in the preceding discussion of Whitehead, it should be made explicit that this thesis follows the line of interpretation, in opposition to the Platonic or Rationalist Whiteheadians, that it is Whitehead's intention to remain true to the insights of empirical philosophy which is most fundamental to his philosophy of organism.

[2] P.R., p. 19.

Finally, Whitehead protects himself from all attempts to regard his philosophy as a pseudo-science when he remarks at the conclusion of his preface to Process and Reality - "In philosophic discussion, the merest hint of dogmatic certainty as to finality of statement is an exhibition of folly."[1] And throughout the whole of the Whiteheadian corpus there is an insistence upon an asymptotic approach to statements about the nature of things. He seeks always to allow room for correction, imagination, and further speculation.

In short, if one understands Whitehead in terms of his most basic assumptions, it seems clear that he is in agreement with Hume that the dogmatism and superstition which has characterized a great majority of metaphysical statements in Western thought must be eschewed. Whitehead's aim was to avoid such pretensions, and here is where he has been most seriously misinterpreted. This does not mean that all metaphysical generalizations should be dismissed as meaningless, however. Here Whitehead's comment about philosophy destroying its usefulness, "when it indulges in brilliant feats of explaining away,"[2] takes on its real point. In contrast to the Analytic affirmation of "subtle positivism," Whitehead sould contend that unless some attempt is made to understand the generalities which are contained in statements like the psychological or linguistic naturalism which proclaims - "That is how people are." - philosophy has abdicated its complete responsibility. Whitehead would certainly take issue, in other words, with this form of "subtle positivism."

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[1] P.R., p. x. [2] P.R., p. 25.

In sum, the fundamental difference of opinion about the contemporary task of philosophy remains. Whiteheadians and Analytic philosophers will never agree so long as the latter conceive of their aims as Pears apparently does.[1] However there are possibly some grounds for discussion which follow from this treatment of the similarities between Whitehead and Hume. It would appear that Analytic philosophers need to recognize that there are other philosophical approaches which are congruent with Hume, in addition to their own. In brief, this disagreement between Whiteheadian and Analytic philosophers does not imply that Whitehead and Hume are also at odds. For, in terms of the formal requirements which even Pears admits Hume states for philosophy, Whitehead and Hume appear to have similar understandings of the general task of philosophy. Whitehead, like Hume, constructs his philosophy upon the fundamental model provided by human experience. And secondly, Whitehead is aware of the dangers of dogmatic or pseudo-scientific metaphysics and seeks to avoid them at all costs.

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[1] It should be noted that there is some ambiguity in Pears' contention that Wittgenstein adheres to a 'subtle positivism." We shall deal more directly with this ambiguity in the conclusion of this essay. (See Chap. 5, Section 2, c, (2.).

In brief, if Pears argues that Hume's philosophy ought to be regarded as a type of naturalism with a psychological emphasis, it seems just as plausible to contend that Whitehead's philosophy has an equally naturalistic bent. To be sure, Whitehead goes a step farther than the statement, "That is how people are." But his purposes seem entirely consonant with Hume's intention to remain true to the facts of human experience, which is the presupposition which underlies such a statement. Furthermore, as we have indicated above, there is some point in questioning whether such a statement adequately represents the complete thrust of Hume's own philosophy. For it appears certain, at least with regard to the facts of human experience, that Whitehead and Hume share a similar naturalistic orientation.

(2) Question two: Is the role of the feelings or the passions similar in both Whitehead and Hume?

Because the greatest portion of the foregoing discussion deals directly with the importance which Hume attaches to the role of the passions as providing that element in human experience which allows us to understand the basis for our moral judgements, for our understanding of the causal connection, and for our perception of sense data, it would be redundant to rehearse that discussion here. What remains to be understood is whether Whitehead's understanding of the role of emotions could be said to play a similar role in his philosophy. It is not difficult to show that this is the case. First of all, in terms of those notions which Whitehead regards as fundamental to his philosophy of organism, and which incidentally, (and unfortunately in keeping with his misapprehension of Hume) he regarded as utterly novel contributions, the emotional element is primary. Specifically, I refer to the notions of prehensions and nexus. Whitehead defines the former term as follows: "...it is referrent to an external world, and in this sense will be said to have a 'vector character'; it involves emotion, and purpose, and valuation, and causation."[1] In Whitehead's philosophy it is the phenomena of prehensions which connect experience. And, while Whitehead contends that prehensions include purposiveness and valuation, characteristics which Hume fails to treat explicitly in his discussion of the role of the passions, there is the similar contention that it is by means of the emotional element that prehensions do their work. Actual entities prehend one another by virtue of the feelings which they have for one another. The second fundamental notion, nexus, plays a similar role in Whitehead to Hume's discussion of the passion of sympathy. Whitehead says, "any such particular fact of togetherness among actual entities is called a 'nexus'."[2] In comparable fashion it is the bond provided by the emotion of sympathy, "the general sense of the common interest," which provides the obligation present in Hume's discussion of morality.

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[1] P.R., p. 28. [2] P.R., p. 30.

In other terms, nexus is the word which Whitehead uses to describe the consequence of the connection which is "prehended."

But perhaps the more interesting discussion of the similarity of the role of feelings is revealed in the two discussions of the question of personal identity in Hume and Whitehead. In the discussion of the basis for personal identity Hume makes a provocative comment.

> What then gives us so great a propension to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possest of an invariable and uninterrupted existence thro' the whole course of our lives? *In order to answer this question, we must distinguish betwixt personal identity, as it regards our thought or imagination, and as it regards our passions or the concern we take in ourselves*.[1]

Interestingly, and incidentally unfortunately for our purposes, Hume says he intends only to treat personal identity in terms of the first of these two distinctions, that is only in terms of "our thought and imagination." However, the implicit contention which Hume makes here, and which we have referred to above, is that personal identity when viewed from the perspective of the passions is not encumbered by the problems of atomism which is the inescapable consequence of a sensationalist attempt to trace some continuing perception of personal identity. Implicitly, Hume is suggesting that the phenomenon of personal identity is intelligible only in terms of the function of the passions. We feel that we are the self-same individuals, regardless

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[1] Tr., p. 253. (Italics mine)

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of the disconnected sense impressions we have of specific moments of experience. And it is on this basis alone that we place our assurance in our own continuing identities. This is the clear conclusion of Hume's discussion of the doctrine of perception which we have treated in detail above.

When Whitehead discusses the question of personal identity he arrives at similar conclusions, however stated with much greater precision and sophistication. Like Hume, Whitehead catalogues the errors of attempting to understand personal identity from a sensationalist or atomistic perspective.

> Descartes "Cogito, ergo sum" is wrongly translated, "I think therefore I am." It is never bare thought or bare existence that we are aware of. I find myself as essentially a unity of emotions, enjoyments, hopes, fears, regrets, valuations of alternatives, decisions--- all of them subjective reactions to the environment as action in my nature. My unity--- which is Descartes' "I am"--- is my process of shaping this welter of material into a consistent pattern of feelings.[1]

Like Hume, Whitehead concludes that whatever unity or identity is perceptible in personal identity is a result of feelings rather than thoughts. Specifically Whitehead argues, "Thus nature in general and the body in particular provide the stuff for the personal endurance of the soul."[2] In Whitehead's estimate it is the body, as the receptacle of feelings, which serves this function of communicating the sense of unity and continuity which is integral to the experience of personal identity. While

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[1] M.T., p. 228. (Italics mine)

[2] M.T., p. 222.

Hume does not speak, specifically of the human body's role in feelings it seems clear that Hume implies that the passions have the influence which they have as a result of the body. Hume would never speak of disembodied passions. Therefore, it seems entirely possible to argue that in terms of the question of personal identity, a question which is fundamental for both Whitehead and Hume, the role of feelings and the role of the passions is nearly synonymous. In both instances it is this common element in experience which is relied upon to explain the connectedness of experience. Without this discussion of felt connection, no discussion of connection is possible. While the statement which Hume makes is not explicit it does seem clear that his treatment of the superiority of the vulgar theory of perception allows us to draw this fundamental similarity between him and Whitehead with regard to the role of feelings. For both philosophies the world is experienced as an integral whole as a result of feelings. And while the implications which Whitehead elaborates upon as a result of this fact are different from those which Hume treats, or rather fails to treat, it does seem possible to trace this similar attitude toward the fundamental element.

(3). Question three: If sensationalism wasn't his fundamental goal, why did Hume subscribe to it?

The final question comes as a result of tracing this seeming connection between Hume and Whitehead. It seems necessary to ask why, if there is so much that appears to be similar in Whitehead and Hume, should Hume have interpreted himself as subscribing to an epistemology which appears to be avowedly sensationalist? This is not an easy question to answer. Hume was notably silent about the reason which might be offered to explain just why it was he took the direction which he did. Apparently he was guilty of Whitehead's "dogmatic fallacy" in this much, that he felt that the basis for his principles was transparent enough. This is certainly the thrust of his discussion of the foundation of sensationalism in his discussion of the origin of our ideas. In his discussion of the relationship between impressions and ideas he makes this explicit when he says; "I believe it will not be very necessary to employ many words in explaining this distinction. Everyone of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking."[1] With this appeal to common practice, Hume apparently felt he had adequately handled any question which might arise.

However it is evident that in the course of his discussion that questions about the adequacy of such an appeal to common practice arose for Hume himself. In the preceding chapter we saw how time and again Hume transcends a strict sensationalism in order to attempt to fully explain human experience. Thus there is some point in asking about just what Hume meant by his early appeal to the common sense obviousness of a sensationalist epistemology? Perhaps the most simple answer that can be given is that Hume regarded sensationalism as the primary starting place for philosophy, as the method by which he sought to free philosophy from fantastic speculations. However it is also clear that he felt sensationalism was finally incapable of providing all of the answers. Thus Whitehead is correct when he suggests that Hume seems to forget his sensationalist premises in his own argument but is quick to reimpose these same premises when he is pressed by other antagonistic modes of thought.[1] It might be argued that Hume's commitment to sensationalism was a commitment to a method rather than to the results of such a method. With that interpretation in mind it can be argued that Hume had at least two purposes in such a commitment. First, he felt that by this method he could be instrumental in reducing the chaos of metaphysical speculation, which surrounded philosophy in the eighteenth century, to some more practical understanding of the principles which underlie human thought and action. And secondly, he no doubt felt that a rigid employment of the sensationalist method could not help but produce a healthy scepticism regarding the roles of reason and the senses which would pave the way for a reassessment of the relation between the "sensitive" side of human nature and the "cogitative" side.

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[1] Tr., p. 2.

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[1] See above, Chapter 4, Section 1.

There are numerous instances which indicate Hume's appeal to sensationalism as a method of ridding philosophy of confusing metaphysical jargon. Hume's words are:

> Here, therefore, is a proposition (sensationalism) which not only seems in itself simple and intelligible, but, if a proper use were made of it, might render every dispute equally intelligible, and banish all that jargon which has so long taken possession of metaphysical reasoning and drawn disgrace upon them...
> When we entertain, therefore, any suspicion that a philosophical term is employed without any meaning or idea (as is too frequent), we need but inquire, from what impression is that supposed idea derived? And if it be impossible to assign any, this will serve to confirm our suspicion.[1]

Hume's point was that since ideas are frequently the source of confusion because of the ease with which it is possible to move from one idea to another it is good to have the check which is provided by our impressions, due to their greater strength and vividness. But the emphasis here is upon the immediate methodological adequacy of such an approach rather than upon its final adequacy in providing a complete philosophical picture. A similar point is made in Hume's Abstract. There Hume remarks about the notion of the origin of ideas first enunciated in the Treatise and concludes; "and it were to be wished that this rigorous method were more practiced in all philosophical debates."[1]

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[1] Inq., p. 30.

Furthermore there is compelling evidence in Hume's discussion of scepticism regarding the senses which lends even stronger confirmation to this conclusion that Hume regarded sensationalism more as a useful tool for dealing with "sophistry and illusion," than as a final adequate method for explaining the workings of the human understanding. In the section of the Inquiry devoted to "sceptical doubts concerning the understanding" Hume first states his conclusion that "all reasonings concerning matter of fact seem to be founded upon the relation of cause and effect."[2] He next contends that knowledge of causes and effects is dependent upon experience not reason.[3] And finally, as we have seen already, he concludes that experience itself finally proves incapable of providing us with certainty, that is rational certainty, about the "inference" from cause to effect. Thus there is ample evidence to indicate that Hume was not finally convinced of the adequacy of sensationalism to provide answers to the most troublesome questions about the operations of the human understanding.

What we have attempted to demonstrate is that Hume's own attitude toward sensationalism must be taken into account when one applies that term to him. With that approach in mind we have discovered two essential facts. First, that Hume's use of sensationalism was undertaken with peculiarly polemical goals in mind, as a means of protecting philosophy from the unguarded and unsubstantiated statements of speculative metaphysicians. And second, that Hume felt that a rigid application of sensationalist methodology could not help but reveal the inadequacies of such a "strained attention to sense data" which would culminate in a reconsideration of the passions vis a vis man's rational faculties.

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[1] Inq., p. 186. [2] Inq., p. 41. [3] Inq., p. 42.

Thus we might conclude that if one wants to regard Hume as a sensationalist he must restrict his purview to the polemical comments which Hume makes early in the Treatise and Inquiry. His words there are unmistakeably sensationalist. But our intention has been to demonstrate that Hume is a larger figure than this, and that finally his contribution to philosophy cannot be assessed on these narrow grounds alone. Hume also sought to mark out a new alternative in philosophy, an alternative which would help to right the balance between reason and the passions. In the development of that new alternative Hume was not always clear and unambiguous. But it is also evident that in that alternative Hume was not as guilty of the crimes of atomism and sensationalism with which Whitehead charged him, either. His faith in the order of nature and in the equitable and just principles of human nature override his sensationalism in the end. And that fact cannot help but shape both our final estimate of Hume as well as our understanding of Whitehead's view that Hume's philosophy is fundamentally inimical to his own. Just how close some of Whitehead's doctrines are to statements which initially appeared in Hume will be the subject of our next chapter.

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Chapter Five - Toward a More Complete Apprehension of David Hume

Thus far we have examined Whitehead's critique of Hume as well as the Humian response to this criticism which follows from an understanding of the importance of the role of the passions in Hume. As we indicated in the discussion of subsidiary questions at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, there are profound implications here for an understanding of the congruity between Whitehead and Hume. However, before discussing the congruity in greater detail, perhaps it would be illuminating to examine one of the reasons why Whitehead failed to recognize the completeness of the congruity between himself and Hume.

1. Whitehead's Mistaken Cartesianism and Hume's Modest Newtonianism.

In short, the primary source of Whitehead's misapprehension of David Hume can be seen in his mistaken assumption that Hume is essentially a Cartesian. That is the thrust of his remarks in Modes of Thought.[1] There he contends that the Cartesian formula, "clarity and distinctness"... "inevitably prepared the way for Hume"; and that Hume is to be regarded as the "culmination" of this doctrine. This is an error plain and simple. True, it may be, that Hume espoused a sensationalist empiricism, but it is incorrect to assume on that basis that he professed allegiance to a Cartesian cosmology. As we noted above,[2] Whitehead modifies this charge to some extent with his suggestion that if Hume did profess such Cartesianism he did so inconsistently. However, this is hardly sufficient recognition of the distance between Hume and Descartes.

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[1] See M.T., p. 154f.

[2] See above Chap. 1, Section 2.

A more precise statement of the origin of Hume's sensationalism would note the importance of Newton. As we indicated above,[1] Hume was particularly attracted by Newton's "method of analysis," a method which he praised because of its reluctance "in admitting no principles but such as were founded on experiment."[2] Clearly the "purple peroration" is Hume's attempt to implement Newton's method. Although it is clearly a sensationalist statement, it is not Cartesian. In particular, mention should be made of Newton's anti-Cartesian bias. His attack upon the Cartesian method's inconsistent projecting of hypotheses parallel to and not always compatible with its superficial sensationalism was outlined above.[3] Thus Hume could speak in laudatory fashion of Newton's accomplishments in his own History of England: "Newton shewed the imperfections of the mechanical philosophy and thereby restored her (nature's) ultimate secrets to that obscurity in which they ever did remain."[4]

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[1] See above Chapter 2, Section 5, d.

[2] See above Chapter 2, Section 5, d.

[3] See above Chapter 2, Section 5, d.

[4] David Hume, History of England, cited by Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 57.

The thrust of these remarks is that Newton's empiricism differs markedly from others. Hume seems to suggest that it evidences a modesty about the possibility for a truly adequate empirical account of matters of fact. It insisted only that the purpose of empirical science was to formulate the laws and principles which follow from certain observed regularities of nature. Where such regularities fail to appear one was prevented from stating any laws. Furthermore Newton maintained, as we noted above,[1] that such a search for laws must be forever distinguished from the "occult" search for causes. To be sure, Newton's disciples were somewhat less cautious in their application of this method than was their mentor. But that does not deny the fact that Newton's sensationalism was much more cautious than was Descartes'. Thus the fact that Hume is more Newtonian than Cartesian is the first recognition which must be made if a more complete picture of Hume is to appear.

But that admission is only a first step toward apprehending Hume in all of his complexity. A second and much more profound recognition is the fact that Hume adhered more closely to Newton's approach than to that of his disciples. In Chapter three we saw how Hume's attempt to apply the Newtonian method of analysis is continually frustrated, as Hume discovers the impossibility of ever providing adequate empirical justification for such incorrigible notions as causality, belief, and space and time. Hume's attempt to complement the deficiencies of Newtonian sensationalism is perhaps one of the most profound movements in his thought. I refer to Hume's offering of a second, psychological account of the basis for causality.[1] Something of the same tack is taken in his discussion of belief when he comments that the universal acceptance of belief must provide evidence of the widespread influence of psychological rather than rational forces.

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[1] See above Chapter 2, Section 5, d.

This resort to psychological notions when empirical and rational ones prove inadequate has led some critics to accuse Hume of psychologism, namely, the offering of inappropriate psychological answers to logical questions. Above, we noted a profound discussion of this charge against Hume by Karl Aschenbrenner. Aschenbrenner's defense of Hume is correct in my estimate. He demonstrates with regard to Hume's analysis of causality that while Hume offers a psychological analysis of what forces influence us to believe in a causal connection as well as a rational analysis of the idea of causality, Hume keeps the two analyses clearly separated. Thus it cannot be claimed that Hume offers psychological answers to logical questions. Aschenbrenner analyzes two additional examples of Hume's reputed psychologism, namely the charge that his psychological accounts of logical inference and probability inference commit the error of psychologism. But, insists Aschenbrenner, Hume never professes to offer anything but a psychological account of these two types of inference. Specifically in Hume's discussion of the psychology of logical inference Hume is explaining his charge that "all knowledge resolves itself into probability." Says Aschenbrenner, while such an accusation may seem paradoxical and shocking to logicians Hume is doing nothing more than expounding on the truism that while "figures never lie, liars do figure." In brief Hume is acknowledging that the mortality of human reasoners cannot help but condition their apprehension of the truth, an analysis which, while certainly upsetting to logicians, cannot be considered as a form of psychologism since it professes to be nothing more than a psychological account.

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[1] See above Chapter 3, Section 2, b.

Aschenbrenner's intention is to defend Hume, thus he spends little energy in attempting to draw conclusions about the significance of Hume's complementary use of psychological analysis. In my estimate a good deal more could be made of this treatment of the psychological side of Hume. Here is graphic confirmation of Hume's departure from both Newtonianism and sensationalism. But more than that, Hume's treatment of psychological issues is an important evidence of his intention to lend his weight to the move to reconsider the importance of reason and the passions. Hume is not suggesting that the passions can provide some type of substitute for our rational capacities. As we indicated above, belief is no substitute for knowledge.[1] The certainty which is provided by relations of ideas is never atainable in the realm of matters of fact in which beliefs operate. However it does appear that Hume, in his continual appeals to psychological discussions and in his repeated professions of "academic or mitigated scepticism," is suggesting that perhaps epistemological certainty is not always necessary. Perhaps the case can be stated even more strongly than that for there are instances when Hume suggests, (e.g., in his profession that "reason ought only to be the slave of the passions"), that perhaps rational certainty leads to unfortunate and often dogmatic consequences. It is little wonder that logicians and radical empiricists have taken umbrage at such implications. However, the thesis of this essay is that there is profound significance in this psychological emphasis for not only does it signal Hume's departure from even a Newtonian type of sensationalism, it also implies that Hume must be regarded as the advocate of a type of philosophical naturalism in addition to his recognition as the ancestor of contemporary positivism. Furthermore the recognition of this dual heritage's origin in Hume has other profound consequences for the study of the history of philosophy and for the current status of metaphysical discussion.

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[1] See above Chapter 3, Section 2, c.

2. Consequences of a More Complete Apprehension of David Hume

a. The Whiteheadian adumbration of Hume

If Aschenbrenner's vindication of Hume is correct, and I think my own analysis of Hume's complexity confirms Aschenbrenner's account of the Hume's separation of the logical and the psychological, then the way is paved for a new understanding of the relation between Hume and Whitehead. Specifically, it becomes possible for us to understand some of the puzzling remarks which Whitehead made about the connection between himself and Hume in a new light. Although he nowhere makes any explicit reference to the possibility of Hume's being recognized as an antecedent of philosophical naturalism, Whitehead does remark on several different occasions concerning the similarity between certain of his own most basic notions and those of Hume. Apparently his misapprehensions about Hume's sensationalism prevented him from dealing with the possible continuity between himself and Hume. However if a more complete apprehension of Hume is available, perhaps it will be possible to make more of these similarities than Whitehead himself was willing to acknowledge.

Whitehead admits that his own sense of the connectedness of experience which is expressed in his doctrine of subjective forms is present in Hume. In addition he finds other Humian analogues for his two notions dealing with

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(1) the manner in which eternal objects serve as lures for feeling and, (2) his fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Are all of these similarities purely fortuitous or is there some deeper continuity between Whitehead and Hume which Whitehead failed to recognize? I will attempt to demonstrate that the latter is the case, but first it is necessary to look more carefully at the similarities which Whitehead mentions.

The philosophy of organism's emphasis upon the connectedness of experience is expressed, says Whitehead, in Hume's doctrine of custom. Whitehead argues that the doctrine of custom is really dependent upon Hume's doctrine of memory. Whitehead maintains, "what Hume, in his appeal to memory is really doing is to appeal to an observed immanence of the past in the future..."[1] While perhaps this states the case a bit more strongly than Hume would have stated it himself, no doubt Hume would have found it difficult to speak of an "observed" immanence, I do not think Whitehead is mistaken in his conclusion that Hume's doctrine of custom is "nothing but a special case of the doctrine of subjective forms."[2] While Hume might have found it difficult to speak of observing the past, he probably could have spoken quite openly of the way in which the past is felt or remembered, which is quite close to the meaning of Whitehead's doctrine of subjective forms. Interestingly,

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[1] A.I., p. 186.

[2] A.I., p. 186.

Whitehead remarks at the conclusion of this discussion: "This appeal to Hume has the sole purpose of illustrating the common-sense obviousness of the present theses."[1] Apparently Whitehead felt that this tracing of continuities between himself and Hume might render his own philosophy less esoteric.

Evidently the discussion of this particular similarity made quite an impact upon Whitehead for later in Adventures of Ideas where he is speaking about Bradley's support for his understanding of the connectedness of experience, he also remarks:

> Curiously enough Hume also agrees. For his only togetherness of the stream of impressions of sensation, which in his doctrine are distinct existences at distinct times, lies in the 'gentle force' of association which must lie wholly within an occasion of experience.[2]

Whitehead is not entirely correct here. For as we saw above, the "gentle force" provided by the doctrine of association is not the only occasion for the "togetherness of the stream of impressions of sensation." In fact the more central discussion of this association appears in Hume's doctrine of causality. Nevertheless it is correct to assume, as Whitehead does, that there is a fundamental similarity between his philosophy and Hume's regarding the inherent connectedness of experience.

Yet another important similarity between himself and Hume is noted by Whitehead in his discussion of the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness." Formally, the fallacy is defined as a form of overstatement. In particular, Whitehead recognizes the dangers of such fallacious overstatement in his recognition that the order of nature cannot be justified by the mere observation of nature. Thus Whitehead argues that Hume's insistence upon "academic scepticism" can be recognized as Hume's attempt to avoid committing the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Like Hume, Whitehead argues that to attribute order to nature on the basis of sense experience is to render experience more concrete than it actually is.[1] Evidently Whitehead regards his own philosophy as a further adumbration of this point which Hume first made.

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[1] A.I., p. 187.

[2] A.I., p. 234.

But perhaps the most significant discussion of similarity is evidenced in Whitehead's comments about the order provided by eternal objects. For here is contained the basis for Whitehead's contention on the one hand that Hume's philosophy is "gravely defective" and on the other his suggestion that some of his most fundamental doctrines have their antecedents in Hume. In Process and Reality, Whitehead quotes the lengthy passage from the Treatise[2] dealing with Hume's discussion of a possible exception to his impressions-ideas epistemology. The example is the

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[1] S.M.W., p. 52f. Interestingly Whitehead here remarks that the misapprehension by his contemporaries which caused Hume's more constructive contributions to be overlooked was caused by a certain "anti-rationalism" of the scientific public.

[2] Tr., p. 6.

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familiar one about the possibility of conceiving a color shade which is missing from a color spectrum purely on the basis of the comparison of ideas of color alone. Hume argues that the fact that such a non-empirically grounded idea is possible is an exception to his doctrine that every idea has its origin in some preceding sensory impression. Whitehead's comments about the passage are significant.

> Hume puts the "instance" aside as being particular and "singular"; it is exactly this estimate which is challenged by the philosophy of organism. The analysis of concrescence, here adopted, conceives that there is an origination of conceptual feeling, admitting or rejecting whatever is apt for feeling by reason of its germaneness to the basic data.[1]

In short Whitehead apparently felt that Hume's discussion was an earlier version of his own doctrine that eternal objects, in this case the color missing from the spectrum, can serve as lures for feeling. Thus Whitehead demonstrates a possibility only dimly apprehended by Hume, that there are instances where ideas precede impressions. Unfortunately Whitehead's understanding was so shaped by his misapprehension of Hume that he was prevented from recognizing the significance of these similarities. In his estimate they were no more than "singular instances" which could be overlooked. However, if the significance of Hume's deliberate investigation of psychological notions is understood then, perhaps, these exceptional similarities between Whitehead and Hume can be viewed in a new light, indicating that Whitehead is in actuality a further adumbration of Hume.

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[1] P.R., p. 133.

But to maintain that such is the case requires not only that these similarities which Whitehead noted be understood in a new light, it also requires that some more fundamental congruity between Whitehead's and Hume's general intentions be cited. While it is impossible to make precise statements about such matters, it does not appear to be far-fetched to argue that Whitehead shared with Hume the same formal intention of placing philosophy on a new tack. In Hume's Abstract he remarks that one of the purposes of the Treatise is to supply a defect which had appeared in most of the current works of philosophy concerning the treatment "of probabilities and those other measures of evidence on which life and action entirely depend, and which are our guides even in most of our philosophical speculations."[1] Hume is here referring to his intention to deal with a different type of material than that commonly dealt with, the phenomena of beliefs and their resulting psychological influence upon experience. Certainly these phenomena cannot be too far afield from Whitehead's discussion of the emotional element in experience expressed in terms of his doctrines of prehensions and nexus. It would appear that with the introduction of those apparently novel doctrines Whitehead too, was attempting to redirect the course of philosophy and to urge upon it the consideration of notions which had, heretofore, been regarded as "probabilities."

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[1] Abs., p. 184.

Still another instance of this similar general intent can be gained from the comments which Whitehead and Hume make concerning the respective roles of scepticism and dogmatism. In Adventures of Ideas, Whitehead discusses the contrasting influences of speculation and scholarship in the development of thought.

> Speculation, by entertaining alternative theories, is superficially sceptical, disturbing to established modes of prejudice. But it obtains its urge from a deep ultimate faith, that through and through the nature of things is penetrable by reason. Scholarship, by its strict attention to accepted methodologies, is superficially conservative of belief. But its tone of mind leans towards a fundamental negation... Pure speculation, undisciplined by the scholarship of detailed fact or the scholarship of exact logic, is on the whole more useless than pure scholarship, unrelieved by speculation. The proper balance of the two factors in progressive learning depends on the character of the epoch in question and on the capacities of particular individuals.[1]

Clearly, Whitehead sees himself as righting the balance in this present epoch by introducing the element of speculation into an era which has become, perhaps, too narrowly scholarly.[2] But I think it may also be maintained that Hume played a parallel role in his own epoch when he chastised both rationalists and sceptics for their narrow understanding. In particular he sought to separate himself from what he regarded as a foolish, and in the end, an inconclusive argument. His words on the matter were:

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[1] A.I., p. 112.

[2] In the conclusion to the chapter on speculative philosophy in P.R., p. 26f, Whitehead remarks: "Philosophy is the welding of imagination and common sense into a restraint upon specialists, and also into an enlargement of their imaginations."

> No philosophical dogmatist denies, that there are difficulties both with regard to the sense and to all science: and that these difficulties are in a regular, logical method, absolutely insolveable. No sceptic denies, that we lie under an absolute necessity, notwithstanding these difficulties, of thinking, and believing, and reasoning with regard to all kind of subjects and even of frequently assenting with confidence and security. The only difference, then, between these sects, if they merit that name, is that the sceptic, from habit, caprice, or inclination, insists most on the difficulties; the dogmatist for like reasons, on the necessity.[1]

What Hume sought to do was to reconsider the issues being debated by these two "sects" by injecting the discussion of material which had heretofore been regarded as speculative. Clearly, Hume, like Whitehead, felt that there were some positive advantages to be gained by this enlargement of the discussion. And while such congruities do not point to any necessary connection between Whitehead and Hume, there is an intriguing similarity of intention. In some sense both of them saw themselves as the authors of speculative philosophies which would help to nudge philosophy off of its complacent rational and empirical moorings. With that general similarity in view perhaps it would be profitable to make further investigations.

Thus we are led to the possibility of drawing some comparisons between Whiteheadian and Humian presuppositions. Here again one can cite some interesting congruities. For example, there seems to be a close identity between Hume's statement, explicative of his psychological side; "reason is and ought only to be the slave of the passions,"[1] and Whitehead's comment: "The basis of experience is emotional."[2] Whitehead's statement appears in his discussion of the structure of experience in Chapter eleven of Adventures of Ideas. His contention there is that the Cartesian subject-object relation is incorrectly stated when it is described as synonymous with the knower-known relation. Whitehead's statement is:

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[1] David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, p. 219.

> I agree with this presupposition, but not in the sense in which subject-object is identified with knower-known. I contend that the notion of mere knowledge is a high abstraction, and that conscious discrimination itself is a variable factor only present in the more elaborate examples of occasions of experience. The basis of experience is emotional. Stated more generally, the basic fact is the rise of an affective tone originating from things whose relevance is given.[3]

At base the Whiteheadian understanding revolves around the notion that "affective tone" conditions and structures experience at the pre-conscious level such that it is unrealistic to discuss the subject-object relation on cognitive terms alone. For feelings enter into this relation at a yet more fundamental level than that represented by conscious intellection. It seems that while Whitehead's statement is both more precise and more sophisticated it is clearly continuous with the understanding represented in Hume's comment. In particular when we review the role of the emotions in Hume's doctrine of moral sense and in the psychological definition of causality, it does seem plausible to discuss this continuity between Hume and Whitehead. The thesis which Hume advances in both these instances is that the mind is responsible for the connections between is and ought, between cause and effect. But "mind" here is really Hume's way of referring to the psychological influence of the passions. Thus like Whitehead, I think Hume could contend that experience is truly shaped by emotions.

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[1] Tr., p. 415. [2] A.I., p. 178. [3] A.I., p. 178.

Another dramatic parallel between Whitehead and Hume can be glimpsed with regard to the Whiteheadian doctrine of necessity in universality. Succinctly stated the doctrine insists, "there is an essence to the universe which forbids relationships beyond itself as a violation of its rationality."[1] This sentence comes as close as any to summarizing the whole thrust of the Whiteheadian program. However, if the more constructive side of Hume is understood it can be remarked that such a doctrine might uniquely characterize his philosophical program as well. For in numerous instances Hume seems to present notions which might subsume this doctrine as their underlying presupposition. The Humian theory of the origin of ideas contains this notion as its first premise. Hume's contention is that there can be no input for our thoughts from sources external to ourselves. All our ideas take their origin from experience of our own natural human constitutions. Hume puts that notion dramatically in the Treatise.

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[1] P.R., p. 6.

> Let us fix our attention out of ourselves as much as possible; Let us chace our imagination to the heavens, or to the utmost limits of the universe; we never really advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can conceive any kind of existence, but those perceptions, which have appear'd in that narrow compass. This is the universe of the imagination, nor have we any idea but what is there produc'd.[1]

Some have remarked that this doctrine in Hume is representative only of an inescapable solipsism. At times it appears Hume himself falls prey to such solipsism.[2] But it is also clear that other discussions in Hume reveal an understanding which shows marked congruities with Whitehead's doctrine.

As a case in point Hume's discussion of miracles shows a clear continuity with Whitehead's doctrine of necessity in universality. The thrust of this argument, as well as its later expansion in the Dialogues, is that belief in miracles requires an appeal to external sources of agency, sources which if given credence, would completely undermine any acceptance of the "essence" within the universe which "forbids relations beyond itself."

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[1] Tr., p. 67.

[2] Witness Hume's discussion of personal identity for example.

> A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined... Nothing is esteemed a miracle if it ever happen in the common course of nature... There must, therefore, be a uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as a uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle, nor can such a proof be destroyed or the miracle rendered credible but by an opposite proof which is superior.[1]

In a note which follows this discussion Hume contends; "A miracle may be accurately defined, a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent."[2] But if this be granted, as Hume so graphically demonstrates in the Dialogues, then God must be regarded as the source of irrationality and maliciousness. As a firm believer in the orderliness of nature Hume cast himself in the role of his opponent of such irrationalism. His intention was to demonstrate the reasonableness of human nature, a reasonableness which he regarded as requiring no appeal to external agents for support. And though it must be acknowledged that Hume's scope of enquiry was restricted to the investigation of principles of uniformity in human nature, it still must be granted that the concern to regard those principles as self-sufficient is clearly an antecedent of Whitehead's doctrine of necessity in universality.

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[1] Inq., p. 122f.

[2] Inq., p. 122.

Perhaps this statement of congruity between Whitehead's doctrine of necessity in universality and Hume's epistemology and his discussion of miracles is the most dramatic evidence of the similarity between the two figures. If it can be granted, and I think it can, that this is Whitehead in a nutshell, then it seems clear that Whitehead is much closer to Hume than he himself acknowledged. But more important, it illustrates a point about Whitehead which some have overlooked. The doctrine of necessity in universality is really the most convincing statement of Whitehead's empiricism. To be certain his is an empiricism with a rational tone about it, but it is a rational empiricism he offers, not an empirical rationalism. This is an important distinction, for upon it rests the contention which we have already expressed, that Hume and Whitehead share similar naturalistic emphases. The congruities which we have indicated between them seem to press for that inescapable conclusion.

Thus it seems quite plausible to argue, that with regard to certain fundamental intentions and presuppositions, Whitehead is clearly continuous with Hume. But what about those doctrines which Whitehead, himself, contends are fundamentally inimical to Hume? Doesn't the presence of such remarks indicate the need to be a bit more cautious than we have been in drawing this comparison between the two? Perhaps there is a necessity for at least stating these similarities _sotto voce_, lest misapprehension be compounded by these connections. However, I think it can be

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maintained, cautiously, that this new perspective on Hume even permits us to see the divergencies between these two figures in a new light.

Specifically, Whitehead contends that one of the errors of current (positivist) epistemology originates in the absence of any understanding of the influence of the body upon our perceptions. We mistakenly assume that our perceptions consist of the data provided by the five senses and forget that "... there are an indefinite set of obscure bodily feelings which form a background of feeling with items occasionally flashing into prominence."[1] Thus Whitehead concludes; "The current philosophic doctrines, mostly derived from Hume, are defective by reason of their neglect of bodily reference."[2] In some sense Whitehead's remark here is inconsistent with the statement, described above, concerning the continuity between the doctrine of subjective forms and Hume's notion of custom. Clearly, if Hume can speak at all about having some sensation of the immanence of the past, then this sensation must originate from sources outside the five ordinary senses. Whether it is possible to suggest that Hume must refer implicitly to the influence of the body in such matters is not clear, but it would not seem implausible to suggest this. His contention is that the source of our doctrine of cause and effect must find its origin in the influence of the repeated perception of cause and effect. Clearly Hume must have had some vague understanding of the influence of the body as the receptacle of such repeated perceptions, although such an understanding is never clearly articulated. Perhaps a better rejoinder to Whitehead's charge can be taken from Hume's concluding comments about scepticism at the end of Book One of the Treatise. There Hume is attempting to make some intelligible comment about the consequences of the scepticism which he has so devastatingly applauded. The question to which he addresses himself is: How can one remain sane and hopeful in the presence of such all-pervasive doubt? His response to that question, while not immediately addressed to the question of bodily reference, does seem relevant.

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[1] M.T., p. 209. [2] M.T., p. 209.

> Most fortunately it happens, that since reason is incapable of dispelling these clouds, nature herself suffices to that purpose, and cures me of this philosophical melancholy and delirium, ... I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hours amusement, I would return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any further.... I may, nay, I must yield to the current of nature, in submitting to my senses and my understanding;... But does it follow, that I must strive against the current of nature, which leads me to indolence and pleasure?.... If I must be a fool, as all those who reason or believe anything certainly are, my follies shall at least be natural and agreeable.[1]

To be sure it is a long way from Hume's exhortation to follow nature in seeking some panacea for philosophical melancholy to Whitehead's notion of bodily reference. But it does not seem far-fetched to argue that the germ of Whitehead's notion is present in Hume. Hume is here referring to the congenial influence of conventional behavior as well as the pleasant sensations of indolence afforded by dining, conversation, and other accompaniments of the general life. But at base I think it is clear that he is describing much the same phenomenon which Whitehead describes in his doctrine of bodily feelings which "form a background." Although Hume's statement is neither as precise nor as sophisticated, he was clearly advocating the importance of giving attention to the same dimension of human behavior. As a proper Anglo-Saxon it is remarkable that Whitehead did not see fit to recognize the significance of that discussion of Hume's own remarkably Ango-Saxon nature, for it seems to be a clear antecedent of his own emphasis upon the continuity provided by nature in the form of bodily reference.

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[1] Tr., p. 270.

But there is another perspective upon this difference between Whitehead and Hume which promises to illuminate the distance which separates them with even greater clarity. Mason W. Gross in his essay entitled, "Whitehead's Answer to Hume: A Reply,"[1] contends that if it can be acknowledged that Hume subscribes to a principle of the uniformity of nature, and the above reference clearly indicates that Hume does hold such a belief, then Whitehead's principle of the maintenance of order is metaphysically quite different from Hume's. Gross's argument is that Whitehead's principle presents a doctrine of internal relations while Hume speaks only of external ones. Gross concludes:

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[1] Mason W. Gross, op. cit., Alfred North Whitehead, ed. Kline, p. 65f.

> In the former, if the environment is altered to any extent, the entity within that environment is correspondingly altered. In the latter this connection does not necessarily follow. Whitehead's principle follows from his account of the nature of an actual entity; Hume's principle, on the other hand, has no essential or "rational" connection with his cosmological presuppositions.[1]

We have seen above,[2] how difficult it is to speak about a doctrine of relations, whether external or internal, in Hume. Experience is related for Hume and apparently, because of his rejection of the doctrine of associations, the means by which that relation is experienced is more emotional than rational. But in spite of the inchoate character of Hume's discussion I do think it is possible to suggest that Gross's contention that Whitehead's principle and Hume's are metaphysically different is wrong. If Hume held that the environment is connected by emotional ties then he would also have to admit that to alter that environment would entail a corresponding alteration in the entity inhabiting that environment. Hume did not address himself to such a question but that seems to be the clear connotation of his reliance upon custom. If custom describes the state of the environment, and such customs are altered in any way, then the organisms which abide by those customs must change as well, since for Hume "custom is the great guide of human life."[1] Nor does it seem correct to conclude as Gross does that Hume's principle of the uniformity of nature is inconsistent with his other cosmological presuppositions. Here again is another instance of the Humian misapprehension. The fact that Hume does not see fit to give logical shape to his reliance upon custom and the passions is no reason for arguing that such an understanding was not fundamental or consistent with Hume's other notions. On the contrary, Hume's discussion of psychological influences which accompany our perceptions and thought, and which defy logical formulation, would appear to be the only philosophically consistent avenue for him to follow. For as we have argued throughout this essay, Hume's intention in raising these matters was to demonstrate the inadequacy of all strictly logical attempts to describe the principles of human experience. Thus one of his cosmological presuppositions, which ought to be recognized as sharing equal significance with his sensationalism, is the notion that the only adequate way to treat certain aspects of human experience is psychological.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] See above Chapter 4, Section 3, b, (2).

That fact does not mean that Hume ought to be exempted from the charge of neglecting a doctrine of internal relations. So far as I can see, his philosophy contains no such doctrine. Though as we indicated above, in our discussion of Hume's attempt to grapple with some understanding of power or necessary connection, he does clearly suggest that nature is animated by a certain dynamism which is the corollary of any doctrine of internal relations. In some sense this charge of neglect seems anachronistic. For in spite of Whitehead's statement that Locke gives primitive expression to such a doctrine, it was certainly not well formed in him or in any other predecessor or contemporary of Hume. If it had been perhaps Hume's views would not have been open to the misapprehension which we have described.

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[1] Inq., p. 58.

In summary, a more complete apprehension of Hume does appear to confirm the hunch with which this essay began that Hume is a forerunner of the philosophy of organism. In particular, Whitehead's attempt to draft a cosmology which takes its departure from the presupposition that the basis of experience is emotional, would appear to be a much more adequate adumbration of Hume's own faltering attempts to speak about the importance of the passions. No doubt Hume would have been pleased with some of Whitehead's doctrines. In addition to the ones mentioned above, Hume would in all likelihood have found the discussion of prehensions, nexus, and the discussion of causal efficacy intriguing, for these notions lend shape and intelligibility to phenomena which Hume found to be incorrigible. But the philosophy of organism is certainly much more than an adumbration of Hume. There are elements of rationalism which no doubt Hume would have found incredible, in particular the discussion of eternal objects and the more sophisticated doctrines of the categoreal scheme would have befuddled Hume for they would have rendered his epistemology unworkable. But it does seem possible to suggest a strong affinity between these two figures in so far as they are both concerned to render intellible what appears. They share that common Anglo-Saxon trait in their deep mutual concern to speak the truth about experience without counting the cost of philosophical popularity.

b. The new apprehension of the relationship between Hume and Kant

If one assumes, as we have above, that contrary to traditional Whiteheadian doctrine, Hume is not the antithesis of the philosophy of organism but an earlier, though less precise, exponent of some of the doctrines of that philosophy, then it must also be acknowledged that some revisions are necessary in the traditional apprehension of the relationship between Hume and modern philosophy. The current view is that Kant attempted to respond to Hume's demonstration of the impossibility of any rational attempt to justify experience. David Hall in the article referred to at the outset,[1] remarks in this same vein that Kant's philosophical efforts were directed at the rescue of rationalism by attempting to "expand the boundaries of theoretical reason"... "to revitalize reason in its practical mode."[1] But Hall states, and here he is consistent with philosophical orthodoxy, that Kant accepted Hume's "sceptical reduction" but attempted to circumvent it by bifurcating knowledge. Thus for Kant it remained possible to talk consistently about rational necessity and universality so long as one recognized the split between the noumenal and the phenomenal.

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[1] See above, Chapter 1, Section 2.

Norman Kemp Smith[2] remarks in the same light, that Kant is really continuous with Hume. For Kant's Copernican Revolution appears to be little more than an attempt to give rational shape to Hume's contention that causality exists in the mind and not in objects. And Whitehead too shares this opinion. It is the source of his real disagreement with Hume and the origin of his notion that the philosophy of organism is a radical alternative to this sensationalist philosophical cul de sac. His words are:

> Combining Newton and Hume we obtain a barren concept namely a field of perception devoid of any data for its own interpretation, and a system of interpretation, devoid of a reason for the concurrence of its factors. It is this situation that modern philosophy from Kant onwards has in its various ways sought to render intelligible. My own belief is that this situation is a *reductio ad absurdum*, and should not be accepted as the

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[1] *Loc. cit*., p. 459.

[2] See above Chapter 1, Section 1.

> basis for philosophic speculation. Kant was the first philosopher who in this way combined Newton and Hume.[1]

Another apprehension of David Hume promises to alter this picture of the development of thought. In the main the orthodox doctrine is correct but it requires a subtle and perhaps profound modification. Clearly Kant's philosophy is continuous with Hume's notion of the subjective ground for our judgements about cause and effect, morality, sense perception, etc. However it does not seem correct to assume as Kemp Smith does that Hume's distinction between reason and belief is analogous to Kant's distinction between reason and the understanding. The role of belief in human understanding is not analogous to Kant's notion of the character of synthetic _a priori_ judgements. Kant's intention in his discussion of that doctrine was to show how certain judgements can be considered both necessary and universal in a logical intelligible manner when they are clearly not analytic. His presupposition then is that there is some rational structure which pervades experience by virtue of the uniformity evident in human judgement. And while that notion performs a similar function, and states in a much more precise way what Hume only hints at in his doctrine of belief, it appears to me to change the mood of the discussion profoundly. The basis upon which Hume chose to discuss the doctrine of belief was his clear conviction of the impossibility of framing any coherent rational or logical statement about matters of fact. The only intelligible discussion is a psychological one. And if we are to believe Aschenbrenner, Hume did not resort to psychology in a panic-stricken fashion. He chose to present an alternative psychological account because he felt it was the only adequate one. That means that Hume could not have found himself in agreement with Kant's statements about the necessity and universality of synthetic a priori judgements. Belief for Hume allowed one to speak only of the uniformity of human expectations and the possibility of statistical necessity. But that is a far cry from the logical necessity which Kant attributes to human judgement. For Hume whatever necessity is intelligible is so by virtue of the conventions only and conventions retain their influence by virtue of the feelings which they generate. So necessity and universality are functions of the passions. And if one is to speak of the uniformity of nature in Hume he must do so on the basis of the influence of these passions. Thus while Hume locates necessity in subjectivity, as does Kant, there seems to be considerable contrast between locating it in the expectations generated by the common passions and locating it in the structure of human judgement. In my mind Kant did not understand the importance of Hume's turn to psychology and in this sense his views cannot be considered genuinely continuous with Hume's.

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[1] M.T., p. 184.

But if that is the case then Whitehead's comment about the philosophical cul de sac which runs from Hume to Kant and no further, appears to require revision. For apparently there is a detour which Hume takes, though admittedly it is not a very well-marked one. Whitehead contends that Kant's attempt to render intelligible the Hume-Newton situation is a "*reductio ad absurdum*." We have seen in what sense it must be acknowledged that the Hume-Newton situation is more complex than Whitehead recognized. Whitehead is correct, the Hume-Newton situation is a system of interpretation "devoid of any *reason* for the concurrence of its factors." But the situation is not as nihilistic as Whitehead imagines. Hume's point is that there may not be reasons for our interpretation, but there are feelings which influence us to interpret things as we do. And in actual fact these feelings are yet another way whereby the question of value, which is Whitehead's major concern in all of this discussion of the Hume-Newton situation, may be introduced. To be sure, this introduction of value concerns cannot be justified in terms of rational metaphysics, so far as Hume is concerned. But then can it be justified for Whitehead in terms of conventional rational metaphysics either? I think not. So while Hume's detour may not be the most direct route, it does appear to tun in a direction which Whitehead himself would like to go.

Thus it would appear that this orthodox dogma requires modification. Hume is only formally the predecessor of

Kant. In so far as Kant misunderstood the significance of his psychological discussions he has failed to follow the direction which Hume himself would have taken. But this raises another interesting issue regarding the question of how the history of philosophy is to be correctly appropriated. It seem clear that a good deal of confusion concerning the Humian misapprehension has been generated because philosophers have committed their own version of the error of historicism by assuming that thought follows a logical pattern of development. Thus we have seen how Whitehead assumed that Hume adhered to the Cartesian dogma of "clarity and distinctness" and that Kant attempts to rescue reason from the sceptical reduction which is the logical culmination of such a doctrine. David Hall elaborates the pattern of logical development even farther. His notion is that Hegel's philosophy "shared the same principal error as the Humian and Kantian schemes and perpetuated this error into contemporary philosophy."[1] There are analytic philosophers who exemplify the same oversimplification.[2] In fact the error is widespread in contemporary philosophy. It has been one of the subsidiary aims, albeit more implicit than explicit, of this essay to attack this error. We have demonstrated that in some sense every epoch in the history of thought shares with the eighteenth century that "unity of heterogenous elements" which Leslie Stephen describes so vividly.[1] Thus to assume that one can justify a philosophical position in terms of the history of philosophy without recognizing that the history of thought has an ambiance about it which frequently defies discussing it in terms of logical development is to court further misapprehension and confusion. In short it is possible to see some logical progression between Hume and Kant, but that is only part of the picture, and to let the story rest there is to multiply both schism and confusion among philosophers.

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[1] Op. cit., p. 459.

[2] See above Chapter 1, Section 1.

c. The more appropriate Whiteheadian critique of Hume and its relevance to the discussion between Whiteheadians and Analytic philosophy

This essay began with the rather presumptuous subsidiary aim of opening the possibility for new prospects for rapproachement between the dominant mode of Anglo-American philosophy and Whiteheadian modes of thought. In retrospect, perhaps those initial aims were stated in an overambitious manner. For in the intervening period we have seen the labyrinthine track which philosophy follows in its development and as a consequence it does not seem possible to be so sanguine about agreement on matters of historical interpretation. Nevertheless, this investigation of Whitehead's misapprehension of Hume does appear to have some profound implications for contemporary philosophy.

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[1] See above Chapter 2, Section 2.

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Perhaps the most immediate impact of this discussion should appear to Whiteheadians, but it does not seem naive to suggest that the possible revision of opinion among Whiteheadians called for in this study can effect the state of the current relationship between Whiteheadian and Analytic philosophers.

We stated initially that the proposed correction of Whitehead's understanding of Hume does not signal any major revision in Whitehead's philosophy of organism. It still seems possible to stand by that contention. What is demanded by this study is a new understanding of Whitehead's relationship to Hume. Such a new understanding should take cognizance of the profound congruities between the two figures which we have explicated above. It should also understand in what sense Whitehead is also a necessary corrective to Hume, for it is in this sense, especially, that the possible rapprochement between Whiteheadian philosophers and Analytic philosophers, specifically followers of the later Wittgenstein, can be most effectively comprehended. In order to briefly elucidate the ground for such discussions it is first necessary to comprehend in what sense Whitehead is still a corrective to Hume, before we can suggest the basis for such a detente.

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(1) Whitehead's more appropriate critique of Hume

In the preceding pages we have illustrated how Whitehead's understanding of Hume was incorrect. Its error seems to be more attributable to a sin of omission than a deliberate misreading of Hume. That is not to imply that there are few fundamental differences between Hume and Whitehead. Whitehead was not entirely incorrect when he viewed Hume's philosophy as requiring serious reformulation. Whitehead merely confused what was most fundamental about Hume's contribution to the history of philosophy. And as we have illustrated, he was not alone in this confusion. However, there is still a crucial difference which separates these two philosophies, and we shall attempt to show why this difference of opinion should have been the more appropriate place for Whitehead to raise questions, instead of falsely accusing Hume of adhering to a rigid sensationalism.

Throughout the entirety of our discussion of Hume we have continually been met by a perplexing ambiguity in his thought. On the one hand we have encountered Hume's consistent denial of the influence of reason in the most basic aspects of human experience. Consonant with that denial has been Hume's insistence that the role of the passions or beliefs has greater priority in our most fundamental notions about human experience. "But on the other hand, when Hume discusses the uniformity or reliability which appears to characterize these passions or beliefs, he is prevented by his own statement of the problem from providing any precise rational formulation of such reliability or uniformity. He says merely, that the effect of the passions is traceable to the influence of human customs or conventions and that these conventions must be regarded as natural and therefore reliable, without attempting to say much that is explicit about the basis for this reliability.

It is precisely this ambiguity of statement which has led some interpreters of Hume to charge him with psychologism. They suggest that instead of pursuing his analysis to its logical, and inescapably sceptical, conclusions, Hume attempted to rescue a place for morality, especially, by appealing to the influence of psychological phenomena. And it is also on this same basis that others have argued that Kant's philosophy must be regarded as the only remedy for the inescapable scepticism which is the logical consequence of Hume. Thus Hume is self-contradictory finally, and Kant becomes the champion of the dignity of man.

We have made some efforts to separate our interpretation from these responses to Hume's ambiguity. In response to the question of psychologism, we have demonstrated, with the aid of Karl Aschenbrenner, that Hume's appeal to psychology was not offered as an attempt to rescue his philosophical analysis. The introduction of the discussion of the influence of the passions was regarded as a genuine alternative to a logical or strictly rational estimate of the nature of human experience. It was not included as an attempt to shore up a tottering philosophical account of human nature. Hume sought to mark out a new direction all together, a philosophical understanding of the influence of the feelings. And it is also in this regard that the pejorative estimate of Hume which is offered by some Kantians must also be understood. Hume also sought to champion the dignity of human nature, but he did so in a manner which reacts against the contention that man must be regarded as unique solely because of his rational capacities. Hume appears to argue that his optimism about human nature is promised upon his perception of the manner in which human virtue is the natural outgrowth of human passions, in particular the passion of sympathy.

And it is in this regard that Whiteheadians need to make their most careful scrutiny of Hume, for if they understood a fundamental inadequacy in this latter appeal of Hume's to the important influence of the passions, they might be enabled to understand the significant contribution which Whitehead makes both, as a corrective to Hume, and by extension, to the whole of modern philosophy.

Succinctly stated, the central error in Hume, and therefore the more appropriate object for Whitehead's comments, was his failure to analyze completely the notion of feeling. As we have observed in the preceding discussion, feeling is an all-inclusive term for Hume. It is this aspect of experience which Hume continually refers to when he encounters difficulty in making our most fundamental notions comprehendible. However, nowhere does Hume make explicit what the precise characteristics of feeling are. He does contrast feelings with thoughts, but he contents himself with the comment: "I believe it will not be very necessary to employ many words in explaining this distinction. Everyone of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking."[1] And it is precisely in this failure to distinguish thoroughly the difference between the influence of feeling and thinking that the major inadequacy of Hume's philosophy rests. As a result of this Hume is led occasionally to take the position that feelings or beliefs have cognitive content, a feature which would appear to be denied them if Hume were attempting to make a precise dichotomy between these two aspects of human experience. Norman Kemp Smith also emphasizes this profound inadequacy in his concluding estimate of Hume.

> "Feeling," "passion," "sentiment" are unanalyzed terms; and in dealing with "belief," which throughout he has treated as feeling, (first as liveliness, and later as sentiment), he allows himself every advantage afforded by the laxities of this undefined usage. At need, belief can be spoken of as if it were merely feeling, as much so as the "animal nisus" which precisely on this account he has declared to be incapable of yielding the idea of necessitation. But when his argument requires it, belief can also be treated as a form of opinion or assent, i.e. as involving an awareness of something assented to, and therefore as being in this essential respect cognitive in character.[2]

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[1] Tr., p. 1.

[2] Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 549.

In brief, Hume's philosophy contains a fundamental inconsistency when he argues on the one hand, that belief must be separated from certain knowledge, but on the other hand, speaks of the way in which beliefs must be understood as having an impact upon our thoughts about our personal identity, or our moral judgements.

It is possible to see this inadequacy in Hume most dramatically in his discussion of the influence of belief upon our moral judgements. And since Kemp Smith argues that this is the discussion which must be regarded as the most formative one in Hume, perhaps this is the most profound example of this difficulty. On the one hand Hume insists, "to have a sense of virtue, is nothing but to feel a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character."[1] Thus we are led to regard certain acts as moral or immoral solely as a result of the way in which our own sympathies are evoked by the contemplation of pain or pleasure connected with the act in question. The problem with that understanding of morality resides in the fact that on this basis moral judgements might become purely arbitrary or expedient, a view which must run contrary to Hume's insistence that he sought to see himself as a "friend of virtue." Thus Hume appeals to something like the universality of such feelings as a means of demonstrating that it is possible to found moral discrimination upon something more reliable than a purely subjective feeling. He argues that these same sentiments of morality are universal.

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[1] Tr., p. 471.

> We may only affirm on this head, that if ever there was anything which could be called natural (common) in this sense, the sentiments of morality certainly may; since there never was any nation of the world, nor any single person in any nation who was utterly deprived of them, and who never, in any instance shew'd the least approbation or dislike of manners. These sentiments are so rooted in our constitution and temper that without entirely confounding the human mind by disease or madness, 'tis impossible to extirpate and destroy them.[1]

In another instance he insists that the rules of justice, while certainly the result of human conventions, are still nonetheless considered "laws of nature."[2]

No doubt, Hume felt that he was merely being true to his intention to elaborate the most general characteristics of human experience in this conclusion. And since morality appears to be a general characteristic it seemed appropriate to Hume to draw these conclusions from its very universality. However, the mistake which Hume made in this attempt was his failure to recognize that such generalizations constitute a cognitive judgement about the influence of feelings. He is suggesting that the passions in themselves convey a kind of cognitive influence. Kemp Smith contends that Hume made this mistake because he failed to understand the complexity of feelings. If these beliefs were possible to understand as merely simple sense impressions, that would be one matter, but when Hume suggests that they are also universal, or equivalent to laws of nature, he implies that they have a complexity which transcends simple sense data. Says Kemp Smith, "the feelings are then being taken as involving 'opinion' or 'assent,' and when operating in the moral and aesthetic spheres as finding expression in acts of judgement."[1]

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[1] Tr., p. 484.

[2] Tr., p. 474.

Thus the fundamental incongruity in Hume appears precisely in terms of his desire to be a "friend of virtue." Hume illustrates that one cannot insist, as he does, on the reversal of the roles of reason and the passions unless he also attempts to state more precisely just what the relationship is between these two apparently disparate types of activity. Put another way, if one insists that certain knowledge is restricted essentially to mathematics and algebra, which is Hume's claim, but then contends that the influence of the passions is also certain and reliable, he must attempt to show how the passions can have such cognitive influence. Otherwise the reliability of such natural feelings becomes absurd and incorrigible. Parenthetically, it needs to be mentioned that this attempt to rescue morality from an anarchic type of subjectivity is the most convincing evidence that Hume must be regarded as more than a simple sceptic or sensationalist. It is in this respect, precisely, that Hume seeks to champion the dignity of human nature.

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[1] Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, p. 549.

Therefore, it is upon this dimension of Hume's philosophy that Whitehead should have concentrated his major attention. For if Whitehead had emphasized this ambiguity in Hume and, furthermore, had sought to demonstrate how the philosophy of organism seeks to clarify it, his relationship to Hume would have been more apparent. It is commonly recognized, among Whiteheadians at least, that one of the unique contributions of the philosophy of organism is its analysis of the complexity of the influence of feelings. In particular, Whitehead exhaustively illustrates the way in which feelings can play a cognitive role. In Process and Reality, the cognitive character of feelings is expressed in a variety of ways. Whitehead's emphasis upon conceptual feelings, hybrid prehensions, and his continual reference to the dipolar character of reality (to the mental and physical poles in experience) are all terms which refer to this intention to give shape to the cognitive role of feelings. Specifically, in the fourth and fifth "Categoreal Obligations,"[1] the "Category of Conceptual Valuation," and the "Category of Conceptual Reversion," Whitehead gives his formal statement of the relationship between thought and feeling. Elsewhere,[2] Whitehead contends that these same categories are expressive of his intention to adumbrate Bergson's notion of "intuition," which described the influence of the dynamic relationship of physical experiences upon the thought processes. But perhaps the less abstruse statement of this same discussion, and the more adequate one for our purposes, is stated in *Modes of Thought*.

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[1] P.R., p. 39f.

[2] P.R., p. 49.

In this later work, Whitehead eloquently describes the basic insight of the philosophy of organism that concepts are never independent of emotions.

> Fact includes in its own nature something which is not fact, although it constitutes a realized item within fact. This is the conceptual side of fact. But, as usual, the philosophical tradition is too abstract. There is no such independent item in actuality as "mere concept." The concept is always clothed with emotion, that is to say with hope, or with fear, or with hatred, or with eager aspiration, or with the pleasure of analysis. The variations in the quality of appetition are infinite. But the notion of "mere concept," or of "mere conceptualization," *apart from a relevant emotional derivation which is its emotional origin is fallacious*.[1]

In short, Whitehead appears to agree with the insight Hume expressed so vaguely, that emotional experience does have an impact upon knowledge. And the next sentence which follows corroborates that judgement, for Whitehead contends --

> *The doctrine here maintained is to be found in Hume*, except that Hume oversimplifies the problem by conceiving an initial bare occurrence of sense-impressions devoid of essential relationship to other factors in experience. In his subsequent argument he is apt fortunately to forget his explicit premises. So it is possible to construe his meaning in many ways. But in his controversy with antagonistic modes of thought, he judges them by the strict consequences of these premises.[2]

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[1] M.T., p. 167. (Italics mine)

[2] M.T., p. 168. (Italics mine)

It is unfortunate that Whitehead appears to have been moved more profoundly by Hume's "controversy with antagonistic modes of thought," for if he had paid more heed to this congruity between himself and Hume perhaps this dissertation would have been unnecessary. Instead Whitehead dismisses this instance of similarity as apparently incidental and goes on to explain how the influence of emotional elements upon knowledge must condition philosophies estimate of the role of rationalism.

> For example, in the consciousness of sense experience, we first fix attention on some sensory detail. We then glance around and attend to the environment of sights and sounds. We endeavour to lift into consciousness meaningful units, such as the whole picture, the whole building, the living animal, the stone, the mountain, the tree.... But, in the dim recesses behind consciousness there is the sense of realities behind abstractions. The sense of process. . . , This is the process of rationalization. This process is the recognition of essential connection within the apparent isolation of abstracted details.[1]

Whitehead is here offering his more complete analysis of the relation between thought and feeling, a relationship which Hume glimpsed only vaguely in his continual appeal to the natural influence of the passions. The point which Whitehead seeks to make is a direct rejoinder to Hume's criticism of rationalism. His argument is that even the process of abstraction must take into account the influence of feelings if it is to be truly exhaustive in its attempt to explain experience. Hume recognized this but he was prevented from exploring this insight completely because of the inadequacy of the philosophical tools which he had at his disposal.[1] In particular, his subscription to a Newtonian model of empirical investigation, which sought to see empirical facts always as isolated entities moved at cross-purposes with this insight. Even though Hume sought to circumscribe his adherence to Newton by relying upon the biological emphasis of Francis Hutcheson, his initial aim to follow Newton finally prevented him from understanding fact in this more complex role.

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[1] M.T., p. 170.

In summary, we have argued that Whitehead's critique of Hume was misplaced. Whitehead should have focused his central attack upon Hume's ambiguous statement of the relationship between knowledge and belief. It is here that Hume's philosophy is most inadequate. And it is also with regard to this aspect of human experience that Whitehead's philosophy is most adequate, for in his cosmology Whitehead effectively illustrates the way in which emotions can be said to have a cognitive character.

(2) relevance of this Whiteheadian critique to the Whiteheadian-Analytic discussions

As we have argued above, the fundamental difference between Whiteheadians and followers of the later Wittgenstein could be said to center around the Oxford philosopher, David Pears', view that this type of Analytic philosophy is a continuation of Hume's "subtle positivism." Such a form of positivism is not fundamentally destructive, it merely insists that any effort to justify our behavior by means of an appeal to some external source is inappropriate. Instead it rests securely in the conclusion; "That is how people are." In brief, Pears would appear to regard Hume's fundamental contribution to the history of thought to be his emphasis upon a limitation of the role of knowledge to a discussion of factual accounts about human behavior.

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[1] See Appendix B for a discussion of why Hume was prevented from discussing this issue more exhaustively.

However, as Norman Kemp Smith has illustrated so dramatically, even such a "subtle positivism" is incomplete in its estimate of Hume in so far as it neglects the constructive emphasis present in Hume's insistence that the priority given to reason must be replaced by a new understanding of the influence of the feelings. In short, unless Hume's "subtle positivism" is complemented by his equally fundamental emphasis upon the role of the passions, then Hume's views have been seriously misinterpreted. Specifically, with regard to the Whiteheadian critique of Hume, such an Analytic interpretation of Hume fails to comprehend the manner in which he glimpsed, admittedly inadequately, the important influence which the passions play upon our thoughts.

Thus the question which arises from this new Whiteheadian critique of Hume has to do with whether Analytic philosophers are capable of recognizing the paramount importance of this dimension of Hume's thought as well. At first glance, according to Pears' understanding of

Wittgenstein, it would appear that this is not the case, for he insists upon the fundamental similarity between Wittgenstein and Hume's "subtle positivism."

> (Hume) maintained that causal inference has no objective external justification, and that its only possible justification is that it is a natural habit of thought. He gave the same kind of answer to the question what the basis of morality is, and in general his philosophy is a kind of psychological naturalism. Wittgenstein's later philosophy is another species in the same genus: it is not psychological naturalism, but linguistic naturalism. . . . . . the whole point of answering philosophical questions in this way is that there is no discrimination against any of the modes of human thought. Each is accepted on its own terms, and justified by its own internal standards. But there is another point of view from which this kind of philosophy may be classified as a subtle type of positivism. For what it says is that there is nothing but the facts.[1]

However, in spite of Pears' insistence upon Wittgenstein's attention to the facts, there is an ambiguity in this interpretation, and apparently one in Wittgenstein as well. Several questions arise: What is implied in this preoccupation with the facts? Does such a concern for the facts give evidence of any understanding of the deeper complexity present, for example, in linguistic facts about emotional experience? Pears insists that Wittgenstein adopted an attitude of tolerance toward all modes of thought, but what does it mean to accept each mode in terms of its own internal standard? What value commitments are signaled by such tolerance?

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[1] David Pears, op. cit., p. 184.

Some followers of Wittgenstein appear to answer such questions by contending that the facts speak for themselves, and that furthermore, philosophy ought to focus its energies upon collecting as many facts about linguistic behavior as it can. It is apparent that these philosophers are most seriously endangered by the charge that they are intruding upon the grounds of linguistics. It is also clear that Whiteheadians have no basis for communication with such philosophy. For Whitehead would insist upon seeing, always, the deeper complexity present in the facts.

It is not clear, finally, that Pears, himself, regards such an understanding of Wittgenstein as truly accurate. For he insists that Wittgenstein's own attention to the facts was much more comprehensive in its scope and had a depth of vision about it which denies this simple preoccupation with the facts themselves. Pears argues that, in contrast to Wittgenstein's earlier philosophy, the philosophy of the _Tractatus_, which placed the various modes of thought in isolation from one another and then attempted to draft a comprehensive theory which would explain the reason for such isolation, his later philosophy omits both the gaps between the modes of thought as well as the comprehensive theory.

> The various modes of thought are placed side by side on the new map, which does not actually show the third dimension. _It must be read against a deep background of dream and illusion_, but all that it actually shows is the pattern of our linguistic practices.[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 183. (Italics mine)

The interesting comment is found in the sentence which I have italicized, for it indicates that according to Pears' understanding of Wittgenstein, there is some need to recognize the deeper elements which underlie such a preoccupation with the facts. Furthermore Pears contends that the basis for Wittgenstein's later abandonment of any attempt to frame a comprehensive theory of the limits of language was founded upon his recognition of the fundamental complexity of the phenomena which underlie language. In this new understanding says Pears, "Philosophy is more like an art than a science. It has turned back from the quest for some general and inclusive system, and the sense of wonder now finds its object and its satisfaction in the nuances of the particular case."[1]

If by this attention to the "nuances of the particular case" or the need to read the facts about language "against the deep background of dream and illusion," Pears understood Wittgenstein as acknowledging what Hume also understood, though vaguely, that facts have emotional content, and if Pears is also prepared to acknowledge that the background which underlies such facts also contains a valuational or purposive element, then there appears to be a genuine basis for stimulating discussions between Analytic philosophers and Whiteheadians. For Whitehead's entire cosmology was addressed to precisely this quest. Hopefully, the discovery that Hume also had some concern for this issue, albeit ambiguously stated, will prepare the way for Whiteheadians and Analytic philosophers to initiate new and substantive discussions. Whiteheadians should embrace such a possibility with eagerness, for it signals an opportunity for them to see themselves as more directly related to this figure who is acknowledged by Analytic philosophers as the forefather of Anglo-American philosophy.

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[1] *Ibid.*

Appendix A -- Whitehead's Response to Hume's Dialogues

David Hume is regarded by many Analytic philosophers as the precursor of modern empiricism.[1] His application of the "experimental method of reasoning" opened the door to the modern quest for empirical verification. His discussion of the gap between "is" and "ought" is still the source of much speculative scholarship in Analytic circles.[2] Thus it would appear unusual, to say the least, to suggest that Hume might also be considered as the ancestor of modern natural-empirical metaphysics, pace Whitehead. And yet, apparently, Whitehead himself recognized a certain similarity of general intent between himself and Hume when, in the chapter in Process and Reality devoted to the discussion of "God and the World," he remarks: "What follows is merely an attempt to add another speaker to that masterpiece, Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion."[3] Specifically, the statement which immediately follows this one would appear to be merely a positive reformulation of Hume's own critical assessment of the possibilities for natural religion.

> In the first place, God is not to be treated as an exception to all metaphysical principles, invoked to save their collapse. He is their chief exemplification.[4]

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[1] See Farhang Zabeeh, op. cit., p. 1.

[2] See especially John Searle's paper, "How to Derive 'Ought' from 'Is'" and the responses to it in Analysis, December, 1964.

[3] P.R., p. 521.

[4] P.R., p. 521.

It is my contention that this is precisely the point which Hume makes in more negative fashion in the Dialogues. Thus a close perusal of their respective statements indicates a radical rearranging of stereotypes. Whitehead is not so much a rejoinder to Hume as a more complete explication of notions only partially developed in the eighteenth century. And Hume is not so much the enemy of natural religion as a constructive critic, who sought to demonstrate what is required if philosophical theologians are to continue to make statements about an empirical basis for natural religion. At least this is the thesis which we will attempt to demonstrate.

Anyone who is familiar with Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion might conclude that only the greatest temerity would lead one to suggest that Hume is the ancestor of modern natural religion. For in the Dialogues, Hume chose to attack natural religion's most secure stronghold, the argument from design. Furthermore, he pressed his attack with such genius that the whole intellectual framework of religion was shaken to its very foundations. This tack illustrates the brilliance of Hume's enterprise. Accordingly, it should give pause to anyone who falsely seeks to baptize Hume in the name of natural religion. An ardent opponent of conventional piety, he could easily have decided to besiege the Calvinism of his day, which was inflated with fanatical piety. Instead, Hume, like a contemporary radical, struck out at the liberals' adherence to the argument from design, the central tenent of philosophical theology. In so doing he wrenched the whole discussion of religion from its complacent moorings. The result was Kant's transcendentalism and more than a century of religious scholarship devoted to the resuscitation of philosophical theology as an idealist or existentialist enterprise.

However, the era of natural religion appeared to be over for good. Thus one who now claims Hume as a precursor of a new naturalism should take pains to explain what he means. My contention is that Hume's Dialogues state in critical form the requirements for a new naturalistic metaphysics. The fact that this may be the case reveals something of an ambivalence or ambiguity in Hume's thinking. At the outset of the Treatise Hume appears committed to a radical empiricism, but in the later stages of his argument he speaks more frequently of the significance of such nonverifiable phenomena as conventions and feelings, which are evocative of a trust in the uniformity of nature. In this latter mood Hume is less convinced of the importance of the mechanisms operative in the human understanding and more intent upon his trust in the natural beliefs. The Dialogues were revised during the last years of Hume's life and in my estimate they reveal Hume's later concern for the "natural beliefs" in an even more dramatic fashion that the later portions of the Treatise. Thus they may be indicative of a genuine intention in Hume to state the requirements for natural religion. This fact might be corroborated by Hume's repeated concern for the establishment of "true," that is, philosophical, religion.[1] Furthermore, his concluding note in the Dialogues is that philosophical scepticism "is the most essential step towards being a sound, believing Christian."[2] Therefore the first part of this Appendix will note in brief fashion the propositions which Hume directed at the natural religion of his day. Then we will attempt to show how these same critical propositions find a positive reformulation in Whitehead, in order to give credence to our thesis that Hume did open the door to modern natural religion. No more than a few brief remarks can be made about these propositions here, but references are contained to places where the argument is expanded.

1. The fundamental tenents of Hume's attack on natural religion

a. There is no indubitable evidence of any kind to support the notion that God's designing activity is experienced. This is the death thrust which Hume dealt to the argument from design. The whole of the Dialogues is but an elaboration of this charge.[3]

> And will any man tell me with a serious countenance, that an orderly universe must arise from some thought and art, like the human; because we have experience of

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[1] David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, Bobbs Merrill, Indianapolis, pp. 220-223. (hereafter abbreviated D.C.N.R.)

[2] D.C.N.R., p. 228.

[3] See especially D.C.N.R., pp. 143, 145-50, 166f.

> it? To ascertain this reasoning, it were requisite, that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not sufficient surely, that we have seen ships and cities arise from human art and contrivance . . .[1]

Hume's point is that if natural theologians are to be consistent in their claim that the designing activity of God is an empirical fact, they must show some evidence of perceiving such designing activity. But no one can claim to have experienced the origin of the world. And mere inference from the analogy of human design to the work of a divine Designer is insufficient empirical basis for such a claim.

b. The unique character of the origin of the world forbids analogy from human artifice to divine Artificer. This is a corollary of the first argument which is premised the presence of design in human experience. Hume's point is that we have no standards of comparison for suggesting that the world is perfect and therefore demands an intelligent designer.

> Many worlds might have been botched and bungled, throughout an eternity, ere this system was struck out: Much labour lost Many fruitless trials are made: and a slow, but continued improvement carried on during infinite ages in the art of world-making.[2]

In short, the creation of the world is a unique event and it seems just as plausible to suggest that the supposedly "perfect" design of the world is as much the result of trial and error as it is of divine design. There is no basis for analogy with human experience of intelligent design.

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[1] D.C.N.R., p. 149f.

[2] D.C.N.R., p. 167.

c. Order in the world is just as probably the result of natural processes as of rational and superimposed design. Hume's contention is that there seems to be sufficient evidence to demonstrate that order is just as much the product of what Hume calls "generation" or natural processes, as it is the product of conscious design.

> A tree bestows order and organization on that tree which springs from it, without knowing the order; an animal, in the same manner, on its offspring: a bird, on its nest; And instances of this kind are even more frequent in the world, than those of order, which arise from reason and contrivance.[1]

d. Order is inherent in nature. This is merely a positive formulation of the foregoing criticism, but it raises some weighty philosophical implications for Hume.[2] Hume asks: "How could things have been as they are were there not an original inherent principle of order somewhere in thought or in matter?"[3]

e. "Generation" is more ultimate than design. All of this talk about order as the result of natural processes, or as inherent in matter itself, reveals a unique Humian understanding of the universe. His contention is that the universe is more similar to an organism than it is to a product of human craftsmanship.[1] He makes this explicit in his statement;

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[1] D.C.N.R., p. 179.

[2] See D.C.N.R., pp. 162-63, 170-71.

[3] D.C.N.R., p. 174.

> If the universe bears a greater likeness to animal bodies and to vegetables, than to works of human art, it is more probable that its cause resembles the cause of the former than that of the latter, and its origin ought rather to be ascribed to generation or vegetation than to reason or design.[2]

Thus, at base Hume seems to assent to a belief in the priority of natural processes. And while he does not take pains to make the implications of such a belief explicit, he does show clearly that such a position has devastating consequences for any argument which postulates a divine Designer.

f. Ideas are ectypal not archetypal. This contention is perhaps the major presupposition which separates Hume from those who argue from design, as well as it does from his Kantian successors. The thesis which Hume advances is that not thought, but experience should have precedence when attempting to draft a metaphysical scheme. His words are; "In all instances which we have ever seen, ideas are copied from real objects, and are ectypal, not archetypal, to express myself in learned terms."[3] Those who argue for design, or for a transcendental world, reverse this order. They contend that thought is determinative.

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[1] See D.C.N.R., pp. 180, 190.

[2] D.C.N.R., p. 176.

[3] D.C.N.R., p. 186.

g. To attempt to circumvent the anthropomorphism of the design to Designer argument by postulating a finite God is to court disaster and ridicule. Cleanthes, the proponent of design in the *Dialogues*, attempts to remove his God from criticism, particularly regarding the origin of evil, by suggesting that God is only finitely perfect, and therefore only capable of choices between the lesser of two evils.[1] Such a movement by Cleanthes demonstrates the concern of this position for philosophical respectability, even at the price of Christian orthodoxy. Clearly, Hume's antagonists in this piece were the theological liberals, and Hume took great delight in devastating their pretense at intellectual respectability. His contention is that once the possibility of recognizing God as even eminently finite is admitted, the door is opened to all sorts of absurdities.

> This world for aught he knows, is very faulty and imperfect compared to a superior standard; and was only the first rude essay of some infant Deity, who afterwards abandoned it, ashamed of his lame performance; it is the work only of some dependent, inferior Deity; and is the object of derision to his superiors: it is the production of old age and dotage in some superannuated Deity; and ever since his death, has run on at adventures, from the first impulse and active force, which it received from him. . . .[2]

Hume's intention in this attack is to close even the last possibility of escape for those theologians who wished to contend that the argument from design can be advanced in serious philosophical fashion.

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[1] D.C.N.R., p. 203f.

[2] D.C.N.R., p. 169.

2. Whitehead's reformulation of the Humian critique can be stated:

a. By rigidly applying Hume's notion that ideas of reflection are derived from actual fact, it is possible to get an empirical picture of God's designing activity. Epistemologically Whitehead follows Hume. He contends as Hume does that ideas have their empirical antecedents. In simplest terms, Whitehead suggests that there must be some basis for our experience of the consistent vitality and meaningfulness which novelty possesses. It is not possible to contend that novelty just is a fortuitous event in the universe, for it demands the well-defined possibility for change. It also requires that potentiality be recognized as a determinate element in human experience. Because we experience novelty in such a determinate manner it must be recognized as an actual fact in the life of the world. Whitehead contends that such a phenomenon demands that something is "given" to the world. Thus he asserts that as actual fact it implies the activity of the divine element, providing conditions for potentiality to be more than happenstance, and for change to occur in an orderly fashion. Whitehead contends:

> The things which are temporal arise by their participation in the things which are eternal. The two sets are mediated by a thing which combines the actuality of what is temporal with the timelessness of what is potential. This final entity is the divine element in the world, . . .[1]

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[1] P.R., p. 63f.

Thus, by being strictly Humian, Whitehead is able to suggest that it is possible to regard God's designing activity as an empirical fact.

b. The uniqueness of the universe demands the activity of God. Whitehead is not a proponent of the design argument. He is more concerned about the world's performance then he is about its perfection. He does contend that God is a designer, though God is not alone in this activity, and that his designing activity can be experienced. In fact the uniqueness of the universe is in some sense dependent upon God's agency. We noted above Whitehead's contention that God is the basis for novelty. Elsewhere Whitehead maintains that he must be considered as the "outcome of creativity, the foundation of order, and the goal towards novelty."[1] Order and novelty are instruments in God's "subjective aim"; they are elements which are integral to his own development as an entity in the world. In short there is an integral relationship between God and the world, without which either one would be impossible. This relationship is expressed in terms of the polar antitheses between God and the world.[2] These antitheses express a dynamic and contrasting relationship between God and the world. For Whitehead it is this relationship which makes the world what it is. Therefore, the very uniqueness of the world is dependent upon the activity of God.

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[1] P.R., p. 135.

[2] P.R., p. 528.

c. Order is "generated" by the organisms inhabiting a particular epoch, but it is also given by reason of the participation of the temporal in the eternal. Whitehead contends that order is manufactured by the entities themselves. Therefore the laws which dominate a society are a product of what Whitehead calls the "defining characteristic of that society."[1] But this defining characteristic receives a portion of its reliability by virtue of its participation in the eternal. This is another way of treating the "given" element described in #1. Order becomes an ingredient in the world process by virtue of God's patterning of eternal objects which makes the realization of a determinate potentiality more than happenstance. Thus, while order is a product of what Hume would call "generation," Whitehead would not agree that such order is manufactured out of thin air. There are some eternal antecedents for such order.[2] But the agency by which these antecedents become actual is the result of "generation."

d. Order is inherent in nature. The foregoing statement seems to demonstrate this fact for Whitehead. However perhaps a more convincing argument can be gained from what Whitehead calls the "ontological principle." This principle maintains that matters of fact are the "reasons" which define the nature of reality. In Whiteheadian terms such a statement appears as follows:

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[1] P.R., p. 138.

[2] P.R., p. 132.

> That every condition to which the process of becoming conforms in any particular instance, has its reason either in the character of some actual entity in the actual world of that concrescence, or in the character of the subject which is in the process of concrescence.[1]

In short, the individual contains within itself its own raison d'etre.

e. Creativity is ultimate. The Whiteheadian notion of creativity is no synonym for Hume's term "generation." However, in terms of Hume's criticism of the argument from design it handles the objection Hume raised. Whitehead agrees with Hume that creative processes are the ultimate forces in the life of the universe. Creativity is "that ultimate notion of the highest generality at the base of actuality."[2] Therefore, creativity is a fundamental fact which underlies everything which can be said about the universe. For after all elements have been analyzed, "there always remains the final reaction of the self-creative unity of the universe."[3] In terms of the argument from design, this ubiquitous creativity means that every individual in the universe shares with God, and with all other individuals, the power of creativity.[4] Hence Whitehead could agree with Hume that creativity ("generation") is more ultimate than any arbitrary or superimposed design.

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[1] P.R., p. 36.

[2] P.R., p. 47.

[3] P.R., p. 75.

[4] P.R., p. 339.

f. Hume's notion that ideas are ectypal is an oversimplification. For Whitehead reality is dipolar. Hume is chary about committing himself to such a single characterization of reality. At times he appears to advocate a sheer pluralism, while on other occasions he speaks of a dualism of thought and feeling. His empirical concerns, in which feelings are fundamental, appear to predominate, however. Whitehead would agree with Hume's empirical concerns. In fact he maintains that his term, "data of objectifications," is the nearest analogue to Hume's "simple impressions."[1] He also insists that under the conditions of actuality every idea must have its physical antecedent.

But Whitehead is quick to point out that Hume's pluralistic epistemology left some weighty questions unanswered. Therefore he suggests that while it is true that ideas are ectypal, it must also be the case that ideas can have a given, or eternal character about them. In such an instance they may be produced without empirical antecedents. Hume admitted as much in his remarks about the shade of color which, though unperceived, yet can be known if all of the shades surrounding it in the spectrum are presented. Whitehead contends that this admission of Hume's provides the basis for his contention that ideas can stand above experience when they serve as "lures for feeling."[2]

In response to Hume, Whitehead would not suggest that some ideas are archetypal, in the pejorative sense that Hume was using that term. He would want to contend that mentality does have a unique role to play, however, and that reality cannot be fully comprehended without acknowledging this fact. This contrast between Whitehead and Hume is crucial and the possible incompatibility which it signifies has profound implications for Whitehead's statement that the philosophy of organism is a "recurrence to pre-Kantian modes of thought." For if it is actually the case that it is not possible to wed Hume's ectypal notion of ideas to Whitehead's epistemology of eternal objects, then clearly Whitehead is deluding himself.

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[1] P.R., p. 132.

[2] P.R., p. 132.

g. _God is not finite, but he shares his power with other entities within the actual world_. Whitehead would appear to retain the intention of Cleanthes' remark exempting God from responsibility for evil by virtue of his finitude. But he does so without risking the absurdities which Hume piles upon Cleanthes. God is not finite for Whitehead. He subsists in his primordial nature in the realm of potentiality as a foundation of order and a goal toward novelty. But God is also involved in the world by virtue of his consequent nature. In terms of actuality, God takes account of the world, and his own process of concrescence is influenced by the activities of those entities which surround him. Thus God shares the power of creative agency with finite agents, and, to secure Cleanthes' position, evil can be introduced into the world by these agents whose concern for the full actualization of the process is less comprehensive than God's.

3. A Comparison of the Humian Critique and the Whiteheadian Responses

	Hume's Critique		Whitehead's Responses
a.	There is no indubitable evidence of any kind to support the notion that God's designing activity is experienced.	a.	By rigidly applying Hume's notion that ideas of reflection are derived from actual fact, it is possible to get an empirical picture of God's designing activity.
b.	The unique character of the origin of the world forbids the analogy from human artifice to divine Artificer.	b.	The uniqueness of the universe demands the activity of God.
c.	Order in the world is just as probably the result of natural processes as of rational and superimposed design.	c.	Order is "generated" by the organisms inhabiting a particular epoch, but it is also given by reason of the participation of the temporal in the eternal.
d.	Order is inherent in nature.	d.	Order is inherent in nature.
e.	Generation is more ultimate than design.	e.	Creativity is ultimate.
f.	Ideas are ectypal not archetypal.	f.	Hume's notion that ideas are ectypal is an oversimplification.
g.	To attempt to circumvent the anthropomorphism of the design to Designer argument by postulating a finite God is to court disaster.	g.	God is not finite, but he shares his power with other entities within the actual world.

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4. Conclusions

In terms of our initial assumptions about Whitehead as a possible reformulation of Hume it seems possible to agree that there is a consensus between them concerning three of the major tenents of natural religion:

1. Order is the product of the generative process of beings inhabiting this world.
2. Creative, natural processes are more ultimate than rational superimposed designs.
3. The world is more like an organism than it is like a machine.

This agreement alone gives the lie to those who have assumed, as most of Hume's contemporaries did,[1] that Hume was an infidel clear and simple whose only purpose was the dismemberment of any and all theological beliefs. On the contrary, Hume sought to provoke empirical theologians to think more consistently about the logical implications of their doctrines. In that regard he sought to displace the naive confidence which theologians placed in the Newtonian universe. In particular the thrust of his remarks in the Dialogues is an implicit attack upon Newton's own rationalistic theology. Though he lacks the precision and scope of Whitehead's cosmological vision it does seem clear that Hume presaged Whitehead's analysis of the inadequacies of the Newtonian foundation for theological understanding. Hume sought only to emphasize the role of beliefs as the foundation for all our notions about religion and morality. That does not necessarily imply that because religion is founded in belief it is thereby rendered untenable. Indeed, so far as Hume was concerned, beliefs can be regarded as the only guarantee for any of our assumptions about the world of matters of fact. What is required is that we acknowledge the fundamental significance of beliefs and forever refrain from lending to them an inappropriate aura of absolute certainty.

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[1] See especially the interview with James Boswell, Appendix A, p. 76f. to Library of Liberal Arts edition D.C.N.R.

Hume's insistence upon reserving judgement about such matters would, in the last analysis, appear to be yet another instance of a concern which is repeated in the philosophy of organism. Whitehead's Metaphysical Rule of Evidence[1] sounds the same note as does the concluding sentence from his preface to Process and Reality:

> In philosophical discussion, the merest hint of dogmatic certainty as to finality of statement is an exhibition of folly.[2]

At base then it would appear that Hume and Whitehead must be regarded as sharing a general consensus concerning the possibilities for natural religion. For both of them, religion is tenable only in so far as it focuses its gaze upon the nature of this world and upon the wonderful, orderly, yet finally unpredictable character of experience. That would appear to be the clear conclusion of the similarity, noted above,[3] between Whitehead's doctrine of necessity in universality and Hume's discussion of miracles. Thus Hume and Whitehead are naturalists of the same genre in that they both agree that nature is sufficient in herself without projecting a supernatural world to remedy the deficiencies present in this one.

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[1] P.R., p. 16.

[2] P.R., p. x.

[3] See above p. 180f.

Of course, noting a certain agreement about basic intentions does not unqualifiably confirm our initial assumption that Whitehead provides a more positive reformulation of Hume's critique of natural religion. There are still important questions to ask about this similarity. In particular, two questions could be posed:

1. Does Whitehead really provide the empirical evidence required by Hume for natural religion to become philosophically tenable?
2. Is Whitehead's epistemology really consistent with Hume's notion that ideas are ectypal?

While both questions are to the point, there is a certain difficulty posed by them as well. For in a sense they both involve an element of anachronism. Clearly, Whitehead and Hume share similar concerns about natural religion, but the intervening century and a half between them saw the rise of an entirely new set of categories for understanding metaphysical questions. Specifically, Whitehead's cosmological scheme introduces a complexity of novel categories which makes it difficult to construct any kind of dialogue between Hume and Whitehead. However as we have insisted throughout this essay there is present in Hume sufficient evidence of an attempt to state the critical requirements for natural religion that it is not entirely implausible to suggest a Whiteheadian reformulation of these Humian questions. And if that cen be granted perhaps this imagined interchange across the centuries will appear with greater reality as well.

With regard to the first question, an interesting debate is presently going on between John Cobb and Donald Sherburne concerning the possibility that the notion of God intrudes an incoherent and unnecessary element in the Whiteheadian scheme.[1] The discussion is both illuminating and frustrating because it revolves around the question of the intelligibility of the functions which Whitehead assigns to God in his metaphysical scheme. Cobb argues that God is necessary, that "whatever Whitehead's limitations, he was not so naive as to introduce God where everything would have gone more smoothly without him."[2] Sherburne takes the opposite point of view. While the two positions provide an illuminating perspective upon Whiteheadian modes of interpretation, they also prove frustrating especially when one is attempting to find in Whitehead some answer to the Humian question raised above. In a certain sense the Cobb-Sherburne debate is irrelevant to Hume's question.[1] For Hume was asking for some empirical justification for religious belief and a learned discussion of possible interpretations of Whiteheadian terms doesn't really answer the question. However it does seem possible to suggest an answer regardless of the outcome of the Cobb-Sherburne debate. Whether God is integral to it or not it does seem possible to respond that the philosophy of organism presents a justification for the role of even non-theistic religion which Hume might have found acceptable. As we have indicated above it does not appear to be the case that Hume considered himself the enemy of all religion. His only requirement was that religion take full measure of the significance of faith and not transform such faith into a deductive system.[2] Whitehead's metaphysical scheme seems entirely consistent with that requirement. For his intention is to show that the insights contained in religious beliefs, insights which speak of the value of life, of the importance of charity, and of the providence (Providence) of nature have their firm grounding in an empirical yet metaphysical understanding of the nature of reality.

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[1] See Process Studies, Vol. I, No. 2, Summer, '71, pp. 91-114.

[2] John Cobb, op. cit., p. 91.

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[1] I confess that I find much of the technical discussion between Whiteheadians concerning the viability of Whiteheadian theism confounding because it is carried on at such a high level of abstraction that the immediate relevance to faith experience is difficult to perceive. Furthermore, such discussions about "what Whitehead really meant" appear to be contrary to the Whiteheadian intention to draft a speculative scheme because they transform it into a deductive enterprise.

[2] See D.C.N.R., p. 228.

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In brief, Whitehead's analysis of the process of concrescence of actual entities, which, while not professing to be strictly empirical, yet speaks in terms which shed profound light upon experience, provides the answer which Hume demands.

However concerning the second question, it does not appear so easy to offer a Whiteheadian response that could be considered adequate on Hume's terms. In part this is a result of a certain confusion in Hume concerning the possibility of the "ectypal" character of ideas. The foregoing dissertation notes that Hume himself makes mention of a possible exception to this scheme. Whitehead's discussion of eternal objects as lures for feeling would appear to be yet another dramatic exception. But then as we acknowledged, there is an aura of anachronism about attempting such a Whiteheadian response to Hume. Whitehead presents a rejoinder to Hume's confidence in an "ectypal" epistemology. But as we have argued in the foregoing thesis, there is some cause for question about Hume's own confidence in a purely "ectypal" epistemology. Clearly Hume, himself, was quite ambivalent about the final adequacy of sensationalism.

Appendix B -- A Defense of the Attenuated Development of Hume's Doctrine of Power

In the preceding discussion of Hume's treatment of power, or the dynamic connection between cause and effect, or our sense precepta, we have noticed a peculiar incompleteness. In terms of his argument, we have seen how Hume abandoned his discussion of association for the greater dynamism present in the psychological understanding of the causal relation. However the perplexing question about this change is why, if the latter relation was superior, didn't Hume take greater pains to explain its superiority. There are sound philosophical reasons for Hume's attenuated treatment of this doctrine, but they lie beneath the surface of his argument.

First, it seems clear that the primary reason why this discussion of psychological necessity or power is treated so ambiguously by Hume is that a comprehensive discussion of such issues would have involved Hume in the discussion of something approaching a metaphysics of the passions, and Hume was prevented from dealing with such issues by his own intentions. He was too wary of metaphysical speculation to involve himself in such a discussion. However, in spite of this obvious limitation Hume does take some pains to demonstrate that his proposed alternative discussion of the basis for our idea of power or efficacy cannot be concluded simply with his psychological definition of the causal connection.

In the section which immediately follows the treatment of psychological necessity, Hume proposes a set of rules which he feels may be helpful in judging the relation between causes and effects. The rules are not eminently helpful because they merely schematize what he has already discussed in his preceding argument. Perhaps there is evidence for their elliptical character in the comment with which he concludes these remarks:

> Here is all the LOGIC I think proper to employ in my reasoning; and perhaps even this was not very necessary, but might have been supply'd by the natural principles of our understanding. Our scholastic headpieces and logicians shew no such superiority above the mere vulgar in their reason and ability, as to give us any inclination to imitate them in delivering a long system of rules and precepts to direct our judgment, in philosophy. All the rules of this nature are very easy in their invention, but extremely difficult in their application; and even experimental philosophy, which seems the most natural and simple of any, requires the utmost stretch of human judgment.[1]

This is an important passage in Hume. Here his antipathy for airy metaphysical speculation is clearly evident. But it is also clear from Hume's words about the "natural principles of our understanding" that he had some continuing faith in the order of nature and that in the final estimate perhaps it is this unformed, unexpressed faith in nature which must be regarded as the basis for his psychological notion of causal efficacy.

Furthermore the passage in the Treatise which immediately follows this discussion of the rules of causal efficacy would tend to confirm that conclusion.[2] Here Hume undertakes the discussion of the presence of reason in aminals, a discussion which at first glance might appear to be irrelevant

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[1] Tr., p. 175.

[2] See Tr., p. 176f.

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to the question of power. But Hume's real point is to demonstrate that efficacy is a natural phenomenon without par and that not only man but also animals experience such power. But that fact is only stronger confirmation of Hume's contention that necessity or power is incapable of rational formulation, and furthermore that reason itself must be regarded as subsidiary to man's passionate nature.

> To consider the matter aright, reason is nothing but a wonderful and unintelligible instinct in our souls, which carries us along a certain train of ideas, and endows them with particular qualities, according to their particular situations and relations. This instinct, 'tis true, arises from past observation and experience but can anyone give the ultimate reason, why past experience and observation produces such an effect, anymore than why nature alone shou'd produce it? Nature may certainly produce whatever can arise from habit; Nay, habit is nothing but one of the principles of nature and derives all its force from that origin.[1]

Thus Hume's conclusion about the origin of our idea of power can be traced to habit and the fact that habit is "one of the principles of nature." But since he finds it impossible to give a more precise description of such principles, in the Treatise, he appears to let the matter rest there. Causal necessity or power is a natural phenomenon and we must simply learn to place our trust in nature itself for its basis, since it is impossible to frame an idea of causal efficacy. With regard to Hume's philosophical efforts that seems to be his last word on the matter.

But was it the last word for Hume the man of letters? I think not. It might have been possible for one who espoused a natural theology be it Deist or Christian, to conclude his arguments in such fashion. But Hume had little admiration for the "enthusiasm" which seemed to characterize either of these alternatives. Furthermore it seems incredible that a philosopher who began his investigations with such an insatiable curiosity to "carry its researches still further and discover at least in some degree, the secret springs and principles by which the human mind is actuated in its operation,"[1] should rest his case on such an unformed and inchoate notion as the uniformity and efficacy of nature. And in this regard there seem to be some clues as to how Hume sought to resolve this question for himself, at least, if not for the philosophical world.

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[1] Tr., p. 179.

Much of Hume's later writing was devoted to his History of England. Hume's biographer contends that during his own lifetime it was largely this work which was responsible for his reputation in the learned world.[2] Philosophers have paid little heed to this dimension of Hume, for there has been seemingly little point in attempting to discuss the relationship between his history and his philosophy. In this regard they were not wholly mistaken because philosophy must concern itself with the discussion of philosophical issues. And while certainly more personal issues cannot help but influence a philosopher's doctrines, the interpretation of these doctrines must rest upon the philosopher's own discussion of them without appeal to ad hominems. However in this study we have concerned ourselves with the problem of Humian interpretation, and in that regard it may prove beneficial to consider material which might not ordinarily come within a philosopher's purview. It must also be recognized that Hume was a unique figure in that while much of his writing is lucid, perhaps the most important discussions are filled with vague hints and inchoate notions which demand expansion. Since Hume did not see fit to make these discussions more explicit one must attempt to do so for him, although certainly with a proper sense of caution and humility.

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[1] Inq., p. 24.

[2] E.C. Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 302.

In this regard there is an interesting section[1] in the Inquiry, which immediately follows Hume's discussion of the association of ideas. Apparently Selby-Bigge felt that this discussion was unworthy of consideration for it is completely missing from his edition of the Inquiry. It is included in more recent editions, and to my way of thinking, with good reason, for here Hume makes some interesting remarks about the relation between the phenomenon of causal relations and the writing of history. Hume begins the section with a statement of his intention to discuss the effects of association upon the passions and imagination, He says, "where we may open up a field of speculation more entertaining and perhaps more instructive, than in the other,"[1] that is in the discussion of the association of ideas. Apparently this is another instance of Hume's despair of ever fully living up to his boldly stated promises in the Abstract, concerning the importance of the association of ideas. If that be granted, his concluding remarks appear to be more understandable. For he concludes this section with the disclaimer: "The full explication of this principle (association) and all its consequences would lead us into reasonings too profound and too copious for these Essays."[2]

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[1] Inq., pp. 33-39.

Although this section itself deals with a discussion of the principles of literary criticism concerning the relation between history and epic poetry, which fact must have influenced Selby-Bigge's decision to delete it, in the course of the discussion Hume does say some significant things about causal efficacy and history. The thrust of his argument is that whatever unity or continuity is perceptible in history is largely a result of the influence of the causal relation. He remarks that the "annalist or historian"

> sees that the knowledge of causes is not only the most satisfactory this relation or connection being the strongest of all others, but also the most instructive; since it is by this knowledge alone we are enabled to control events and govern futurity.[3]

However this causal unity which is evident in history does not receive its importance from the rational ability of the historian to specify the precise nature of the causal connection between events. The unity of which Hume speaks is a psychological phenomenon more closely akin to passion than to reason. Hence Hume remarks that epic poetry is really not a great deal different from history. For both deal with the stimulation of the passions. Poetry only stimulates them more intensely and immediately, but the difference is one of degree not of kind. Hume remarks; "The unity of action, therefore, which is to be found in biography or history differs from that of epic poetry, not in kind, but in degree."[1]

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[1] Inq., p. 33.

[2] Inq., p. 39.

[3] Inq., p. 34.

When Hume undertakes the writing of his own history we find his intentions there consistent with these conclusions expressed earlier in the Inquiry. As an historian Hume seemed to be conscious of the relativity of human judgements. His biographer remarks that the earliest memoranda which survive of Hume's historical writings indicate that he intended to compose a wide-sweeping social or cultural history not limited to the narrow political biases which seemed to characterize other historians of this epoch.[2] In this regard apparently Hume presaged the "new" history which Voltaire was to write. Evidently Voltaire, himself, shared that estimate of Hume for in his review of Hume's History of England he remarked, "Nothing can be added to the fame of this History perhaps the best ever written in any language. . .

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[1] Inq., p. 35.

[2] E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 301.

Mr. Hume in his History is neither parliamentarian, nor royalist, nor Anglican, nor Presbyterian---he is simply judicial."[1]

But perhaps what is more important is Hume's own attitude toward the importance of history for in that attitude we can see how history provided Hume with an answer to the questions which his philosophizing had been unable to furnish.

> Its (history's) chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by shewing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials from which we may form our observations, and become acquainted with the regular springs of human action and behaviour. These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science; in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, but the experiments, which he forms concerning them.[2]

Thus in Hume's mind, history was the field of enquiry which allowed one to "discover the universal principles of human nature." And furthermore such a field of inquiry was not divorced from philosophy for by its "records" the moral philosopher "fixes the principles of his science." Hume's history abounds with examples of his discussion of these principles. One example can be gained from the analysis which Hume makes of the events which led to the execution of Charles I.

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[1] Ibid., p. 318. (quoted from Voltaire)

[2] David Hume, cited in Ibid., p. 301.

> History, the great mistress of wisdom, furnishes examples of all kinds; and every prudential, as well as moral precept, may be authorised by those events which her enlarged mirror is able to present to us. From the memorable revolutions which passed in England during this period, we may naturally deduce the same useful lesson, which Charles himself in his later years inferred, that it is dangerous for princes, even from the appearance of necessity, to assume more authority than the laws have allowed them. But, it must be confessed, that these events furnish us with another instruction, no less natural, and no less useful, concerning the madness of the people, the furies of fanaticism, and the danger of mercenary armies.[1]

By means of such historical analysis Hume was able to give more concrete expression to these universal principles which he had been unable to specify in his discussion of the idea of causal efficacy. To be sure the discussion of such principles is not strictly speaking philosophical. But it is certainly consistent with his earlier philosophical discussions. Look for example at our earlier discussion of his account of "artificial" necessity which seems to underlie the moral sense. There his appeal is to the natural, that is universal, presence of morality in human nature as a means of demonstrating his conviction that the principles of justice are truly comparable to the laws of nature. His historical analysis seems merely to be a method for making more concrete, and thereby more explicit, his earlier discussion of these "springs and principles" of human behavior that he despairs of formulating in any rational fashion in both the Treatise and Inquiry.

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[1] David Hume, The History of England, cited by E. C. Mossner, op. cit., p. 317.

So instead of involving himself in metaphysical speculation Hume turns to history as a means of explicating his notion that the idea of power or necessity is more properly considered with relation to the passions than the intellect. Or at least that appears to be one highly plausible reason for Hume's almost exclusive preoccupation with history during his last years. Furthermore, if such a point of view can be acknowledged it allows us to understand with much greater clarity why Hume left some of the most profound notions in his philosophy in such a confusion and disarray. No doubt, Hume felt this was the only course left open to him, given the sad state of philosophical discussion among his contemporaries. While such a course of action may not have won him the unreserved praise of succeeding generations of philosophers, praise which he so evidently deserves, it was perhaps the most prudent use of his talents possible, given the scarcity of any minds among his contemporaries who could serve to help him to refine and clarify his notions. Thus while it may not be a wholly consistent or adequate understanding of the notion of power which is present in a doctrine of relations, it does seem clear that Hume stated in at least a minimal and fragmentary way the importance of understanding nature as animated by a sense of dynamism and efficacy. If such an understanding is not the analogue of Whitehead's doctrine of causal objectification, of if it fails to finally approximate the precision of Locke's own understanding of power as active and passive, it is still an understanding which describes the same basic insight about the dynamically connected character of experience which is present in the philosophy of organism.

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